

RECOMPENSED.

BY MARY FRANCES WILLIAMS.

The train came to a stand-still in the busy depot, and a pretty young girl rushed forward, searching with eager, expectant eyes among the crowd of arriving passengers. Her fair face dimpled all over with smiles as she discovered the familiar form of the friend for whom she was looking. The newly arrived caught sight of her at the same moment, and two sweet, girlish voices rang out at once, —

"Etta!"

"Delphine! Oh, I am so glad to see you!"

"And you're just in the nick of time!" cried Delphine gleefully. "Rex came home from college yesterday, and brought two of his chums; and Alice Lockwood is coming tomorrow; and — is n't it too delightful for anything?"

"What splendid times we shall have!"

"Won't we, though? But let us hurry: it is nearly dinner-time; and I know you are hungry, after your journey. We will take a horse-car, if you don't mind."

"Oh, no, indeed! I like horse-cars; one sees so many people. And your brother's chums — are they nice? I know your brother must be," said Etta, as they stopped at a crossing to wait for the approaching street-car.

"You can't imagine how nice they are; and Rex is just the best fellow in the whole world!" returned Delphine enthusiastically.

Here they got into the car, and seated themselves side by side; but there was no cessation of the talk. Their chattering tongues ran on in an endless flow of innocent, girlish nonsense, all about Rex and

his chums, and Alice Lockwood, and the nice times they would have; and everything was "splendid" and "charming" and "angelic" and "awful;" and every other word provoked a laugh, so merry were their light young hearts.

They were school-friends; and this was their first meeting since their "graduation," six months before. Etta Henderson had come to spend the Christmas holidays with Delphine Landis at her home in Providence. No wonder they had much to say; far more than could be said in the course of a horse-car ride to Elmwood.

They were still chattering like a couple of magpies when they arrived at the handsome residence of Mr. Landis, and Delphine ushered her friend into the house, and up the broad staircase to a pretty room, all furnished in gray and scarlet, which they were to share together.

"For I knew you would like to be with me, Etta," said Delphine. "And I'll help you get ready for dinner right away. It is waiting, I dare say."

"Then I won't dress, if your family are not very particular about such things."

"Oh, not at all. Eleanor never dresses much; and I am always ready, you know, — for anything," said Delphine, with a gay laugh.

So Etta washed the dust of travel from her face, brushed out her black ringlets, added dainty white ruffles of lace to her traveling-dress, with a knot of "cardinal-red" velvet at the throat, and pronounced her hasty toilet completed. And the two girls descended together to the dining-room,

where the family and guests were awaiting them.

"Papa, this is my friend, Etta Henderson," said Delphine, addressing her father, who chanced to stand nearest the door as they entered. "My father, Etta," she added.

The portly, pleasant-looking gentleman gave Etta a cordial welcome to his house, and a lady, clad in trailing gray robes, left the group near the table, and advanced to meet her.

"My sister, Miss Landis," said Delphine, naming her to Etta.

In few and simple words, but with a gracious smile and a sweetly courteous accent, Miss Landis greeted her sister's friend; and as Etta touched her cool, soft hand, and looked into her calm, dark eyes, her heart was touched with a feeling of reverent pity, for there was that in the pale and quiet face of Eleanor Landis which spoke of sorrow and of resignation.

She had once been very beautiful. She was beautiful yet, although the youthful flush and brightness were faded from her gentle, high-bred face, and her hair, which had once been glossy brown, was thickly strewn with gray: yet it was not age which had silvered those abundant tresses; for, judging from her face, her years could hardly number twenty-five. Her look was indescribably sweet and sad; and her face had great intellectual power, for all its saintly calm.

Miss Landis led Etta to the well-laid dinner-table, and as the three young men who stood there turned respectfully to be introduced, she presented them each in turn.

"My brother, Mr. Landis, Miss Henderson."

And a handsome, bright-looking young man of twenty-four bowed low, with a very admiring glance at Etta's pretty face.

"Mr. Belden, and Mr. Merivale."

Etta returned two more deferential bows, from two more young men,—the college "chums" of Reginald Landis,—and then Miss Landis indicated the place she was to occupy at table, next to Delphine, and opposite to "Rex," as they all called him.

He was a fine young fellow, much like Delphine, and from the first he evinced a marked admiration for Etta. When, on the morrow, came Alice Lockwood, a dashing brunette beauty, with many accomplishments, the impressive Mr. Belden fell in

love with her at once, and even Harry Merivale divided his attentions between her and Delphine, who had hitherto monopolized them exclusively; but Rex Landis, thenceforth and forever, stood firm in his allegiance to Etta, whose pretty face and bright black eyes half won his heart when first he saw her, and whose winning ways and excellent qualities quite completed the conquest in the course of her holiday visit. *He was her escort wherever they went; and the merry party of young people went everywhere,—to balls, parties, concerts, lectures. They rode, they walked, they danced, together; and it soon came to be accepted, as a matter of course, that upon all occasions Rex should go with Etta, Walter Belden with Alice Lockwood, and Harry Merivale with Delphine,—for Harry soon found that the brilliant Alice would have no divided homage, and he left her entirely to Belden.*

Etta Henderson thoroughly enjoyed her visit, though she would perhaps have hesitated to confess how greatly Rex Landis's devotion contributed to her pleasure. But she frequently wondered why it was that Eleanor, whose grace, elegance, and manifold accomplishments rendered her a most desirable acquisition to any company, so very seldom accompanied them. At last she questioned Delphine about her sister's noticeable distaste for society.

The two girls had retired to their room, after an evening spent at a specially pleasant social gathering, and Delphine was standing before her dressing-bureau brushing out her sunny hair when Etta propounded her inquiry. For some moments she did not answer; but when she had completed the arrangement of her hair for the night, she came and sat down by Etta's side, and there were tears in her pretty blue eyes as she said, —

"Poor Eleanor! she used to be a belle once, and she queened it as gayly as any of us; but she has no heart for merry-making now."

And Delphine sighed, and repeated, —

"Poor Eleanor!"

"She has had some great trouble, then?" queried Etta, in sympathizing tones.

"I think she is broken-hearted," answered Delphine sadly. "She was deceived, Etta, by the man whom she was engaged to marry. He played her false,—the villain! —and the sorrow almost killed her; for she

loved him as few women know how to love."

"Will you tell me how it was?" asked Etta, deeply interested.

"Yes, if you wish it," responded Delphine.

She paused for a few moments, and then resumed, —

"She met him first about seven years ago, when she was in her eighteenth year; and, O Etta! she was such a beauty! You can imagine how lovely she was, with those poor, pale cheeks as red as Alice's own, and her hair down to her waist in one mass of bright brown curls. Rex and I were so proud of her: we used to say she looked like an angel. I was a child then, and was sent to bed early; and I used to tease to be allowed to sit up and see Eleanor when she was all dressed to go out, or receive company, of an evening. She saw a great deal of company, and nobody was so much admired. I heard papa say to her once that he was getting melancholy from the effect of sympathy for her discarded suitors; and that he had refused so many offers for her hand that he believed he was getting the reputation of a stony-hearted parent.

"But that one came at last whom she did not discard. He was a United-States-Army officer, Captain Gervase Deloraine" —

Here Etta gave such a violent start that Delphine stopped short, and inquired, with surprise, —

"What is it, Etta? Have you heard of him?"

"I believe I have," said Etta, coloring. "But never mind about it now: go on with your story, please."

She did not like to tell Delphine that Captain Gervase Deloraine was the name of her brother Lester's most intimate comrade and best-beloved friend: her brother Lester, who was also an army officer, and who wrote and talked of that boon companion so constantly, and in terms of such superlative praise, that she had long desired most ardently to meet the paragon of all perfection in whom her brother had such delight. She did not like to say that she suspected Lester of designing to make a match between herself and this man whom Delphine had called a villain, and that she had promised to shorten her visit as much as possible, because Lester was coming home on leave, and Captain Deloraine was coming with him. Not liking to tell of

these things, Etta only blushed, and hastily bade Delphine go on.

"Well, they were engaged to be married, Eleanor and Captain Deloraine," said Delphine. "There never was a more completely devoted lover than he appeared to be, and Eleanor was perfectly happy. She thought her lover everything that was good and noble, — and so we all thought him. We were fascinated with him, each and every one of us. I believe I was as much in love with him as Eleanor herself; and Rex fairly worshiped him. As for papa, he placed unbounded confidence in the man to whom he was willing to give Eleanor.

"He was not very handsome; but he was fine-looking, and his polished and courtly manners reminded you of the old French *noblesse* that we read about, — and, by the way, he comes of French descent. He treated my sister with a reverent tenderness that was far more impressive than a show of demonstrative ardor. He was very tall, and he had a respectful fashion of bowing his head when he spoke to her, as if he did homage to her goodness: and well he might; for she is a perfect saint, — my sister.

"And, O Etta! when I think of how she loved that man, and how cruelly he deceived her, I positively hate him!" cried Delphine, her blue eyes flashing through her tears. "He seemed so true and noble; and we all so loved and trusted him! But this is not telling you how we found him out.

"Eleanor had been engaged to him for about six months, and he was urging her to name the wedding-day, when we went to Newport to pass the summer months. The captain was stationed at Fort Adams; and he used to come over to the hotel and see us almost every day. We had the most delightful times, and we grew fonder and fonder of the captain every day. Before we had been there a week it was all settled that the wedding should take place as soon as we returned home in the fall; and I was promised that I should be the bridesmaid. How proud I was! and how I did adore the captain! because it was through his persuasions that Eleanor was induced to promise me that.

"I must hurry over the story of his perfidy, for it angers and excites me to remember that happy time, and then to think how we were deceived in him. We staid there

all summer, just in that way; and at last it came time to go home, and prepare for Eleanor's marriage,—for the day was set, and it only lacked a month to the time. Papa went home a week before we did on account of some business. The day after he went, Gervase was with us, and again the next day; and that was the last time Eleanor ever saw him."

Delphine paused to take breath, and Etta uttered an exclamation of interest and indignation; but she did not ask any questions, for her friend very quickly resumed.

"He staid with us until quite a late hour that evening, and when at last he was obliged to leave he promised to come over early the next morning, as we had arranged to go out and have a quiet little picnic with a few family friends, and he, of course, was indispensable.

"But he did not come. When the hour came at which we intended to set out upon our excursion he had not arrived, and, although we waited until everybody was out of patience, we waited in vain. At last we went off without him, concluding that he had been unavoidably prevented from joining us. We left a message for him, in case he should come over during the day; but he did not come,—not that day, nor ever. He sent no excuse, nor did we hear anything of him until we returned to Providence, at the end of the week.

"Naturally, Eleanor was worried and disturbed, and looked so; and papa, too, seemed uneasy. He inquired about Gervase almost immediately; and when we told him how we had not seen him for several days, papa's face grew angry and threatening, and he sternly asked what day it was that Gervase had disappointed us. When we told him, he looked still more ominous, and muttered,—

"Too bad! too bad!"

"He took Eleanor away to talk with her in private; and though, of course, I did not know at the time what he told her, I know it now.

"He had seen Gervase in Providence that day,—had seen him where the man who married Eleanor Landis must not go. My sister would never ally herself to a man whose morals she could not respect, and she had believed her lover to be fully worthy of her; but papa had seen him enter a low and disreputable house, where no man who respected himself would be seen. At first he

thought he was mistaken in the person; he could hardly believe it was Gervase. But he resolved to be convinced beyond a doubt, and so he waited till he saw the man come out again, and it was Gervase. My father met him, and spoke to him, coldly asking if he was accustomed to frequent that sort of place. The captain stared blankly at him for a moment, and then, coloring up to the eyebrows, snatched out his watch, muttered something about missing the Newport boat, and rushed off, almost at a run, leaving papa to make the best of it.

"The best that could be made of it was bad enough, to a girl of Eleanor's principles; but papa, who is always reasonable, said Gervase must have an opportunity to explain before he was condemned. They both hoped that he would clear himself; but they were sadly disappointed.

"The next day after that of our arrival, Eleanor and I went out calling on our friends whom we had not seen all summer; and finally we staid quite late in the evening at a house where we were rather intimate, and Rex came about nine o'clock to fetch us home.

"The evening was so pleasant, that, instead of going directly to take the car for Elmwood, we went around through the Cove Promenade, and lingered there a little while, enjoying the moonlight and the evening breeze. We thought at first that we were the only persons in the grounds; but presently we caught sight of a couple standing quite near to us, in the shadow of some trees, yet still distinctly visible, and talking together with such absorbing interest that they did not notice our approach. It was the girl who was talking when we drew near, and I thought her voice was deep and harsh enough for a man, though I heard nothing of what she said. She was a large, masculine-looking girl, handsome, but bold and awkward in her manner, and she was dressed in a gaudy, flashy style that matched very well with her looks and voice.

"We were walking leisurely past the two persons, quite unnoticed by them, when Rex suddenly stopped short, exclaiming,—

"Why, Eleanor! don't you see?"

"Yes, Eleanor saw. It was Gervase Deloraine who stood listening to this girl, holding one of her hands in both of his own, and leaning toward her, with his eyes intently fixed upon her face.

"I saw Eleanor turn pale, and Rex was

on the point of speaking to Gervase, when he gave a loud cry of delight, and down he went upon his knees at the girl's feet, passionately kissing her hand, while the tears were actually streaming down his cheeks, as he cried out, in tones so intense with earnestness that we could distinctly hear every word,—

"Oh, God bless you, dear Let! May God forever bless you! Henceforth I swear that all I have is yours. Ask anything you will of me, and I will serve you like a slave. I will peril life, honor, everything for you!"

"He would have said more; but the girl stopped him, and made him rise to his feet. I looked at Eleanor: she was white as death; but she did not speak. She laid her hand upon Rex's arm,—for he was starting toward Gervase, with clenched hands and a blackly furious face,—and without a word she signed him to be silent, and pass on.

"Neither Gervase nor his companion perceived us as we quietly moved away. When we reached home, Eleanor fainted on the threshold; and for several days she was too ill to leave her room.

"Gervase called the morning after that scene at the Cove, but he was not admitted. Papa said, if he had been there, he would have kicked the scoundrel off the premises. I wish he had! How dared he make love to another woman, and devote his life to her, when he was engaged to marry Eleanor? and such a woman, too!

"Poor Eleanor! she came out of her room at last, and from that day forth she never spoke his name; but, oh! the heart-break in her poor white face was enough to make me cry just to look at her. She took Gervase Deloraine's ring and all his letters and everything he had given her, and sent them back to him; but she did not write a line or send a word of message with them. The servants were ordered never to admit him to the house, and from that day to this Eleanor has never seen him.

"She grew thinner and paler day by day, poor girl; and, though she uttered not a word, we knew her heart was breaking. Papa was afraid she would die; and so he took her abroad in the spring, while Rex and I were sent to boarding-school. They went to Italy, and staid three years, and when they returned Eleanor's health was recovered; but her fresh, bright color was quite gone, and all her lovely brown hair was gray, as you see it now. It nearly

broke my heart to see her!" sobbed Delphine, bursting into tears.

Etta was ready to cry, too, from sympathy. She expressed unbounded pity for Eleanor, and the greatest contempt for Deloraine; but she declared that, after all, Eleanor was far too good to have married such a scoundrel.

A few days later, Etta Henderson received a letter from her mother, who desired her to come home, as Lester was expected home very soon, and would be disappointed if he should find her absent.

Etta was a great pet with her brother, and, being equally fond of him, she had no mind to disappoint him. Yet there was another who would be sorely disappointed at parting with her until her visit in his home had been extended to its uttermost possible limits; and Etta knew very well that Rex Landis was more to her than a brother. Her mother's wishes must be complied with, however, and she reluctantly prepared for her departure.

But Rex had no idea of letting her go with matters unadjusted to his satisfaction. Though she was greatly in demand during those last two days, and it required some manœuvring to catch her alone, he contrived to get a private interview; and in half an hour he had proposed to her, and been accepted.

So Etta returned home the affianced wife of Reginald Landis, conditional upon the consent of papa and mamma. She gave him permission to visit her at home, see her parents, and present his formal petition for her hand. Courtesy would require him to wait until his own guests had departed; but he assured her that he should come as soon as he was at liberty.

The young lady reached her home on the same day that her brother arrived, but a few hours in advance of him. Her mother took her up to inspect the rooms which had been prepared for the use of Lester and Captain Deloraine, and remarked, when Etta had pronounced the arrangements perfect,—

"I thought they would like to have the rooms adjoining each other; they are such constant companions, you know. We must be very civil to Captain Deloraine, my dear, Lester thinks so very much of him."

Etta said nothing; but an indignant color flushed her cheek as she wondered how she could be civil to Captain Deloraine, after what she had heard of him. He might be

Lester's friend; but she could not forget Eleanor Landis's gray hair and broken heart.

But when she saw the carriage coming which had been sent to meet the two officers, she forgot all about the perfidious Deloraine, and thought only of her brother. Every one else forgot him, in the first excitement of welcoming Lester. They all gathered about him, exclaiming, kissing, shaking hands, declaring how much he had improved since his last leave, and how well his new uniform became him,—for Lester was a captain, too, but recently promoted, and rather proud of his still new rank.

How they all admired him! And well they might; for he was a handsome fellow, not tall, but well formed, and soldierly in step and bearing. Like his sister, he was *brune*, and his black curls and dark, bright eyes were very like her own.

His friend was entirely unlike him, as such close friends often are. A tall, fair, stately man, much older than Lester, though still young; a proud man, for pride was written in every feature of his strongly outlined face; a sharply observant man, for you could tell that his keen blue eyes saw everything; and not a happy man, by the sad expression of his fine, reticent, yet sensitive, mouth. He stood modestly in the background until Lester called attention to him.

"You are all forgetting Gervase," said Captain Henderson. "Father, mother, sister,—I need not bespeak a welcome for my dear friend, Gervase Deloraine."

No; for the parental hearts went out toward the chosen friend of their beloved son, and they could not say or do enough to make him feel how glad they were to see him. Even Etta could not withhold her hand, nor give it coldly, when Lester said "my dear friend" so fondly; and, looking into those honest eyes, she found it hard to remember that this man was treacherous and false. That noble face was not the face of a villain; and the sadness of those firm lips was not the sadness of remorse. Even in that first hour of their acquaintance, Etta found herself fast losing her prejudice against Captain Deloraine.

And so, when Lester eagerly asked her, the first time they were alone, how she liked his friend, she answered truthfully,—

"I cannot help liking him, Lester; and

yet I am afraid that I ought not to like him."

"Why not, I should like to know?" demanded Lester, in great astonishment and displeasure.

"Because I have heard that he is a bad man," Etta gravely replied.

"Then you have heard an infamous lie!" cried Lester indignantly. "Whoever says that Gervase Deloraine ever did anything to be ashamed of"—

"But, Lester," interposed Etta, as she saw that her brother was getting excited, "the person who told me was"—

Now it was Lester's turn to interrupt.

"You need not tell me what story you have heard, nor who told it," he said, with decision. "I will not believe any one's testimony against Gervase!"

"It may be a mistake," said Etta, in thoughtful accents.

"It is a mistake or a slander," said Lester emphatically. "Believe me, Etta, Gervase has always been a good man. He is a model of honor, generosity, and truth, and has not the shadow of a vice, or even a bad habit."

And Etta said no more; but she was impressed by her brother's faith in his friend. She resolved that she would manage in some way to hear Captain Deloraine's version of Delphine's story. There might be a mistake.

So she watched for her chance to bring the subject forward; but it was not a thing easy to mention, nor was Captain Deloraine a man with whom even a pretty girl might venture lightly to intrude upon the privacy of his heart, or touch his secret with a careless hand, and day after day went by, while Etta grew to like him wonderfully well; but she never saw the time when she dared ask him to explain that chapter in his life-history which he little thought was known to her. It became more and more a riddle to her, as she came to understand how truly noble was the character of Gervase Deloraine, and how utterly he was incapable of doing what Delphine said he had done.

And now she began to be haunted by a constant fear that Rex would come, and meet the captain there, and that trouble would arise between them. Delphine had told how bitterly her brother felt toward Deloraine, and how she believed that if they ever met again Rex would take ven-

geance on him for Eleanor's blighted life; and Etta could well believe that the fiery-spirited young man would not hesitate to call the captain to account wheresoever he should meet him. She corresponded with Rex, but she had not informed him of Gervase Deloraine's presence under her father's roof. She had never mentioned his name; and, indeed, Rex was not aware that she knew the story of his sister's sorrow. Sometimes she thought of suggesting to her lover that they might be holding a mistaken view of Deloraine's conduct; but what could she say in support of such a theory except that she liked the captain, and did not believe him capable of deceit? No: she must discover the truth of the affair before she said anything to Rex.

But, no opportunity presenting to further her intention, it chanced at last that Rex stumbled upon the very catastrophe that she had hoped to avert.

He had written to say that she might expect to see him shortly, but he had not named the exact day when he would arrive; and he had asked leave to bring Walter Belden with him, as that young man still lingered in the Landis mansion,—although Alice Lockwood was gone,—and Rex feared it would not be just the thing to go away and leave him.

Etta carried the letter to her mother, blushing explained the object of Rex's intended visit, and told who Mr. Belden was. With her mother's approval, she then wrote to Rex, bidding him invite his "chum" to accompany him, by all means.

She regretted, however, that he had not been more explicit as to the time of his coming; and, as it proved, her anxiety was not uncalled for. Rex and his friend arrived one afternoon when Etta was out making calls with her mother, and there was no one at home to receive them save the two soldiers; but Lester, who had been told that Etta was expecting friends from Providence (and had not been told that one of them was more than a friend), was prompt to welcome them, in the absence of the ladies. He came out of the library, where he and Gervase were lounging with their cigars, and hastened to usher in the guests.

"My mother and sister are out, gentlemen; but you will permit me to make you comfortable until they return," he said cordially. "I don't know what rooms have

been prepared for you; but if you will leave your portmanteaus in the hall, and come into the library, I will have some coffee sent up, and we shall do very well till the ladies get home."

Greatly pleased at the cordiality of his reception, Rex introduced himself and his friend by name, after which Lester led the way to the warm and cozy library. Gervase politely arose from his seat as they entered, and Lester presented him.

"My friend and comrade, Captain Deloraine, Mr. Belden."

The two young men bowed simultaneously, and Lester added,—

"Captain Gervase Deloraine, Mr. Landis."

But no bland greetings or polite salutations followed this second introduction. As Rex was named, Captain Deloraine started and looked searchingly into his face. A deep flush suffused his own as he recognized the brother of Eleanor, and then he grew very pale.

Rex stood for a moment glaring at the captain, who, deeply embarrassed, knew not what to say. At last he held out his hand in a hesitating way. With a face black with anger, Rex lifted his clenched fist, and struck the offered hand away, while between his close-shut teeth he muttered,—

"Scoundrel! how dare you insult me with the offer of your hand?"

For one instant Captain Deloraine's face grew white with wrath, and Lester looked to see him strike the young man to the floor; but he only said, in a low, stern, voice,—

"You will repent that yet, Reginald!"

And, folding his arms across his breast, he strode out of the room.

"In the name of common civility, what does that mean?" demanded Walter Belden, staring at his friend as if he suspected the young man of having suddenly taken leave of his senses.

"It means," said Rex, hoarse with passion, and quite forgetting where he was, "it means that I know Gervase Deloraine of old, and know him for a false-hearted hypocrite! a lying villain! a"—

Lester Henderson stepped forward, white to the lips, and with both hands clenched. His voice shook with the effort he made to control its tone, as he interrupted Rex,—

"Captain Deloraine is my friend and

guest, sir! I must ask you to retract the language you have just applied to him."

"I retract nothing!" retorted Rex, fiercely. "I repeat every word of it! If there is any more infamous term than I have yet applied to him, I apply it now!"

Lester's wrath broke bounds for a moment, and he thundered, —

"If you dare to say another word derogatory to Captain Deloraine, by heaven, sir! I'll drive that word down your throat! Captain Deloraine is a gentleman and a man of honor."

"He is neither a gentleman nor an honorable man," answered Rex, calmly and deliberately. "On the contrary, he is exactly the opposite!"

Lester's breath came hard, and the blue veins stood out like cords upon his brow. With shut teeth and blazing eyes, he sprang toward Rex. His hand was lifted with a threatening gesture; but he checked himself, and, falling back, regarded the young man for a moment with a look of anger and disgust. Then he said, in tones of haughty contempt, —

"You also, unfortunately, are an invited guest here; that fact protects you for the present" —

"It need not?" Rex exclaimed.

"But," Lester coldly continued, "at a fitting time and place, I shall call you to account for the words you have used concerning a man, than whom a better does not exist. Every insult that you have directed at my friend, I take as offered to myself."

Rex was far enough from wishing to offend Etta's brother; yet, furious with anger though he was, he felt that, in the light in which his conduct must appear to Captain Henderson, he had been guilty of insolence which the soldier could do no less than resent. He saw, also, by the cold look and uneasy manner of his friend Belden, that he too was surprised and shocked; in fact, ashamed of his company. He now bitterly regretted that he had allowed his temper to get the better of his judgment, and betray him into forgetting what was due to the roof under which he had encountered Deloraine. Feeling thus, he attempted to apologize.

"I beg you to believe that I have no desire to insult you, Captain Henderson," he said gravely. "More than that, I will admit that, in my surprise at meeting Gervase Deloraine here, I took an unbecoming way

to manifest my opinion of him. You greatly mistake his character, but" —

"No, sir, I do not mistake!" haughtily interrupted Lester.

Rex had only made matters worse. Angry as he was before, Lester's indignation waxed several degrees hotter at what he considered the impertinence of this fellow, coming here to tell him he was mistaken in his chosen friend, his Damon, his *Fidus Achates*.

"It is not your rudeness, but your attack upon my friend, that I resent," he continued severely. "I allow no one to speak ill of Captain Deloraine in my presence."

Rex's brow reddened: he did not like the tone of Captain Henderson's retort; but before he could answer, a light step came tripping through the hall, and immediately Etta entered the library, calling eagerly to her brother, —

"Lester! where are you Lester?" — and stopping suddenly at sight of Rex and her brother, standing there in such a mutually hostile attitude: for Lester's hands were gripped, and Rex's eyes were flashing; and Walter Belden, standing by, looked very much as if he were preparing to separate the combatants.

"Rex!" cried Etta, and put out both her gloved hands to him, withdrawing one of them the next moment, and offering it to Mr. Belden.

The latter gentleman bowed with great courtesy, and replied to the young lady's greeting with a very visible expression of relief. Rex looked rather sulky, yet there was a certain accent to his tone and an air of confidence in his manner, as he addressed his *flancee*, which, in addition to their calling each other "Rex" and "Etta," told plainly enough what their relations were; and Lester, becoming thus enlightened, stared at Rex with a look so profoundly astonished and disgusted, that Etta exclaimed in displeasure, —

"What is the matter, Lester? Perhaps you do not know it, but you are looking as insolent as you possibly can, — and you can look very insolent when you choose. Have you and Rex disagreed already?"

"The insolence is not mine; quite the contrary," said Lester, with a curling lip. "But I shall leave your guest to explain." And so saying, he turned his back upon Rex, and with a curt nod to Mr. Belden, walked indignantly out of the room.

Etta turned a puzzled countenance to her lover.

"What does it mean, Rex?"

"Etta, why did n't you warn me that Gervase Deloraine was here?"

"Oh! I see it all now," exclaimed Etta, in a tone of dismay. "You have met Gervase, and insulted him. One might just as well strike Lester in the face: he would take it no more amiss!"

"You say 'Gervase' as if he were your friend as well as your brother's!" cried Rex, flushing.

"And so he is," said Etta warmly; and indeed, the whole family had grown to regard Lester's friend next to Lester himself, and Etta, like the rest, habitually called him by his name. "I thoroughly respect him," she added, "and I am convinced that you have sadly misjudged him, Rex."

Rex shook his head, frowning darkly.

"You do not understand, Etta," he said; "the evidence of my own eye-sight cannot be doubted."

"You are mistaken, Rex; I have heard the whole story, from Delphine; yet I am sure that there is some mistake. I intend that the mistake shall be corrected, and all this trouble set right, before I sleep tonight," said Etta resolutely. "But for the present, we will adjourn this discussion, as Mr. Belden is being shamefully neglected."

"Oh, no!" smiled Mr. Belden.

"And, besides, it is nearly tea-time; we are old-fashioned about our meals," the young lady continued. "You shall go to your own rooms, while I run and get my bonnet off, and speak to mamma. Of course she does not know of your arrival;" and accordingly, she summoned a servant to show the young men up-stairs.

When they were gone, she sought out her mother, and after imparting the information that the expected guests were come, she inquired as to the whereabouts of Gervase Deloraine.

Mrs. Henderson did not know where he was; somewhere with Lester, she presumed. So Etta postponed her meditated interview with him until after tea. Neither of the young soldiers were present at this meal, which occasioned much surprise on the part of Mrs. Henderson, but was a relief to Rex, who had been dreading to encounter them again.

Mrs. Henderson was pleased with Rex, and so was Etta's father, who made his ac-

quaintance that evening; and when the young man asked them for a private interview, and preferred his suit for their daughter's hand, they willingly gave their unconditional consent. Mrs. Henderson was anxious that Lester should be informed of the happy arrangement, and greatly the good lady wondered at the continued absence of her son and his comrade. But Lester could not be found, much to the satisfaction of Rex.

It was quite late when the absentees returned from the theatre whither they had gone to pass the evening, in order to avoid a second unpleasant meeting with Rex. All the family, including the two guests, had retired to their several rooms; but Etta was up, and watching for Lester and Gervase. The moment she heard them enter, she ran down the front stairs and pounced upon them, in the hall.

"Have you come at last!" she cried, excitedly. "I've been watching for you this hour. Now come into the library this moment, and prepare for an explanation. No, don't go away, Gervase, I want you," she added, as Captain Deloraine made a movement as if to withdraw.

The captain flushed and bit his lip uneasily, but he obediently followed Etta's lead. Lester went, too, though his stern look showed that he was prepared for the "explanation" which his sister was about to demand. By the time they had reached the library, however, he had sufficiently controlled his temper to speak in his usually affectionate tone, when he addressed his sister.

"Well, Etta, you will explain first, won't you? I want to know who he is,—that fellow who comes here calling Gervase names."

And Lester's hands clenched themselves involuntarily, as he recalled the epithets which had been applied to his friend.

"I will tell you about him, presently," smiled Etta. "But just now I want to tell Gervase a story; and I want you to listen also."

"To—tell me a story?" murmured Gervase wonderingly.

"A story, dear friend, which has two sides," responded Etta. "And when I have told you one side, you must tell the other."

She sat down, and motioned the two soldiers to be seated near her; and, though

evidently puzzled, they complied. Then she turned to Gervase, and with no further warning or prefix, commenced to repeat the story told her by Delphine Landis. Captain Deloraine turned white, as she begun to speak of Eleanor, and as she went on to describe his conduct at Newport, and the meeting with Mr. Landis in Providence, his interest became intense, and several times he was on the point of interrupting her, but she checked him by a gesture. But when she came to speak of what had taken place in the Cove Promenade, the scene which had been witnessed by Eleanor, Lester uttered a sharp cry of amazement. It was echoed by Gervase, and the two soldiers stared blankly at each other. Then Gervase's head dropped suddenly upon his breast, and he murmured, in a choked voice, —

"O Lester! if we had known!"

"Gervase!"

Lester could say no more, for his own voice grew husky; he stretched out his hand, and Gervase clasped it, in silence.

After a moment, Lester spoke again, very gently, as if he feared to hurt his friend, —

"And this young fellow is her brother, Gervase?"

"Yes; no wonder he hates me! Miss Etta," he exclaimed imploringly, "tell me something about Eleanor!"

Etta would have gladly withheld the cruel knowledge of the change wrought by sorrow in the once beautiful and happy Eleanor, but she could not escape the recital. As gently as she could, she told him all. His face whitened, and he pressed his pale lips tightly together, repressing whatever word or sound might have escaped him; but it needed no words to tell what he suffered.

Lester, sensitive to his friend's hurt as if it had been his own, watched him with a saddened brow, and trembling lip; but there was hope as well as sympathy in Etta's face.

"Gervase," she said, and touched him lightly on the shoulder, "will you explain? Dear friend, I do not ask it from curiosity. Will you tell me your side of the story? I see that Lester understands it."

Gervase looked at Lester with a forlorn attempt to smile.

"Tell her, Let, who the girl was that I made such violent love to," he said.

And Lester responded —

"Etta, it was I, Lester Henderson?"

"You! who ever heard — what do you mean?" gasped Etta.

"I mean that Eleanor, — excuse me, Etta, I was familiar with her name before you ever saw her," and Lester laid his hand tenderly upon the shoulder of Gervase, —

"I mean that she saw Gervase talking with me attired in a woman's dress! I was a beardless boy, seven years ago, and made a passable woman, I dare say; though I was a bold-looking huzzy, I have no doubt."

"What was it for? a boy's freak?" demanded Etta, in bewilderment.

"Far from it;" and Lester looked gravely at his friend.

"Tell her all, Let; why not?" said Captain Deloraine.

"All, Gervase? Would it not be better for you to tell it, then?"

"No, no! go on," said Gervase; and Lester turned to his sister.

"If I must tell the story," he said, "I shall tell it in few words. Seven years ago, Etta, Gervase had a sister. She is dead, now; but he loved her very dearly, for she was his only sister, and they were orphaned while she was but a child. Gervase had been father, mother and brother to her; she was all he had to love, until he met Eleanor." Lester put his arm across Gervase's neck, as he said this, but did not look at him.

"She was at a boarding-school in Providence, and her vacation was to commence on that day when Gervase was to have gone to the picnic with the Landis's, — and did not go. He meant to ask Eleanor to invite her down to Newport with them, for the remainder of their stay. She was very young and very pretty, and he thought they would all like her. But when he got back to quarters, he found a letter there awaiting him, — not from his sister, but from the principal of the school, urging him to come to Providence at once, as his sister was in great danger. Astounded and horrified, he applied for leave of absence to go to Providence, and received permission to go, for one day only. He was ordered to report promptly the next evening, by nine o'clock, as he was wanted for special service. So, before daylight next morning, he was on his way to the city."

Etta was listening with breathless interest. Gervase's face was averted, as he rested one elbow upon his knee, supporting

his head upon his hand, and after a moment's pause, Lester resumed, —

"He hurried to the school, and asked after his sister; and they told him a thing so much worse than anything he had thought of that it nearly took away his senses. She had left the school two days before, and they had just learned where she had gone. It was a hard thing for a brother to hear: he would rather have been told that she was dead and buried.

"But he hoped it might not be too late to save her. He hastened to the vile place into which she had been decoyed, Heaven knows how! There are so many traps for thoughtless girls! But, when he sought access to her, she refused to see him. He knew not what to do. He shrank from asking aid of the police, for more or less publicity would be the result of that. He thought if a woman went with him she would show herself: doubtless she was afraid of him. So he went back to the school and tried to persuade some one of the teachers to go, and try her influence with the poor girl; but no woman would go near such a place.

"At last, he returned alone, and made another effort to see her; but he was still unsuccessful; and finally he had to go in a great hurry, lest he should lose the only boat that went to Newport that night. He had to be at the fort by nine o'clock. Half crazed at being obliged to leave his sister there, he rushed out, and at the door encountered the father of his affianced! He could not stop to explain; he had to run to catch the boat; and when he got back to the quarters, he was completely fagged out, and utterly miserable, poor fellow. And then he had orders to go off, early the next morning, in command of a detachment sent somewhere for some purpose, — never mind what; it is of no consequence, — and he could not return for four or five days. Was not that a hard case, Etta?"

"Hard indeed!" murmured Etta, looking sympathetically at Gervase. She saw how his fingers tightened their clasp of Lester's hand, though he neither spoke nor looked up.

"I happened to go into his room, that night," continued Lester, "and found him wild with grief and despair. I had come from West Point only a short time before, and had not known Gervase long, but he had placed me under obligations to him for

many a kindness, and I wanted to do something for him: I made him tell me what his trouble was, and volunteered my services to help him out of it. I was not wanted for duty, and could get leave of absence whenever I asked it. He did not believe in my capabilities at first; but I told him my plan, and he gave consent." —

"Consent is hardly the word, Lester," spoke Gervase, looking up.

"I am telling this story, and I shall leave out all your nonsense!" retorted Lester. "To proceed, Etta, he thought his sister would be likely to see a woman, if any should call for her, but would not see me, for fear of falling into his hands. So I proposed to disguise myself as a woman: I had done it before, in masquerades and theatricals, with brilliant success. I could present myself to Miss Deloraine as a friend of her brother, and carry a letter from him, assuring her of forgiveness, and the kindest treatment, if she would return to him; and I trusted to my lucky tongue to persuade her to go with me.

"To be brief, I carried out this programme to the letter. I went to Providence, carrying a letter from Gervase to his sister. She did see me, believing me to be a woman; and I did persuade her to leave that house in my company. But it took several visits and several days to accomplish this. I got her away at last, however, and I left her in the lodgings I had secured, while I started out, intending to go to my hotel, get rid of my woman's rig, and prepare to meet Gervase, for I knew that by this time he had returned to the fort, and would be in Providence as soon as he could get there. The fact was, he had already arrived, and I encountered him as I was crossing the Promenade. I spoke to him, and he recognized me. I told him what I had done, and — he behaved like a lunatic, and Eleanor witnessed the performance!"

Lester concluded with these words, spoken in a tone which he endeavored to make sarcastic, but his eyes were wet with a suspicious moisture which contradicted the flip-pant tone.

Gervase stood up, and laid both hands upon his shoulders, looking into his face with loving eyes that were brimming full of tears.

"God bless you, Lester!" he said, in a tone that thrilled with deep emotion. "The words I said then have caused me sorrow, —

but I meant them, and I mean them now, and for all time."

Then he turned to Etta.

"He had saved my sister from more than death, when I was powerless to help her, and she was very dear to me. Miss Etta, do you wonder that my gratitude was too great for any common words? do you wonder that I fell upon my knees and blessed him,—that I pledged him the devotion of all my after life?"

"I wonder," said Etta gently, "that Eleanor never gave you an opportunity to explain all this."

Gervase sighed heavily.

"She thought her own eyes had borne witness to my falseness," he answered sadly. "But if I had only known—ah! well, I did not know wherein I had offended. And now it is too late."

"Perhaps not," murmured Etta thoughtfully.

But the hour was late, and she did not stay to speak of what was in her mind. She bade the two soldiers good-night, and sought her room again, to slumber and to dream; to dream of the reconciliation that she was determined to bring about between these two, who had been so sadly parted for so many weary years, and all through a mistake.

Early on the following morning, Etta arose and dressed herself to go out. Before any other member of the family appeared, she had visited the telegraph office, and sent a telegram to Eleanor, bidding her come thither at once. She made no explanation whatever. Perhaps Eleanor would think some evil had befallen Rex; but if so, thought Etta, she would make all the more haste!

At breakfast, Gervase did not appear; a headache, Lester said, in excuse for him: but Etta knew that he did not wish to meet Rex. Lester, to Rex's great surprise, was very courteous and friendly, and cordially expressed his pleasure at the prospect of a relationship between them; but he made no attempt to explain the occurrence of the previous evening. He felt that this was better left with Etta; and he knew by the hopeful expression of Etta's face, and by her shining eyes, that she had her own plans, and Lester knew better than to interfere when Etta set about adjusting any matter.

So, after breakfast, he invited Walter

Belden to join himself and Gervase in a walk, and the lovers were left alone, for Mrs. Henderson had affairs of the house to attend to.

The two captains and Walter Belden remained away all day, and it was growing dusk when they sauntered up the street and entered the house, throwing away their inevitable cigars as they came in. Lester and Mr. Belden repaired at once to the dining-room, in search of lunch. But Gervase declared that he wanted nothing: he had no appetite that day. The drawing-room door stood open, and he entered, seeing two ladies seated at the further end of the room, and knowing by Etta's voice that one of them was she. In the dim twilight he could not, at that distance, distinguish her save by her familiar accents. Of course her mother was with her, he thought. When he entered the room, he had seen no one else, but he immediately became aware that Rex was present.

He stopped short, hesitating in doubt whether to advance or retreat; and before he had decided, Rex and Etta came forward together.

"Gervase," said Etta, in a happy voice, full of strange excitement, so that she could hardly speak steadily, "Gervase, this is my affianced husband. He made a mistake, last night, which I have corrected, and"—

"And I am sorry, Gervase!" cried Rex, impulsively stretching out his hand. "Can you forgive me?"

The captain's face lit up with a glow of happiness, as he clasped once more the hand which had once been so devoted to him. Such a happy hope came into his heart, such a train of possibilities rushed into his mind, that they bewildered him, and he could scarcely find voice to falter,—

"You know the truth, then, Rex?"

"I know it all! You pardon me, Gervase?"

"Gladly!" and with an accent that spoke more than the words, he cried,—

"Only to see Eleanor, now! O Rex! where is she?"

"What if she were here, Gervase?"

Gervase trembled from head to foot, as he said faintly,—

"Don't, Rex! it cannot be." Yet he turned his eyes to that silent figure by the window, and made a step forward, trembling more and more.

"It can be! Eleanor!" spoke Rex.

No need to speak. She had arisen, and was already by his side.

"Gervase, I am here!"

"Eleanor, my darling! After all these bitter years! Oh! God be thanked!"

His arms were about her; his earnest, thrilling voice was in her ears; his manly tears were falling on her upturned face; and his proud head bowed over hers, grown gray with sorrow for his sake. It was not a

scene for other eyes to look upon. Rex and Etta felt this, and quietly left the room.

Rex and Etta were young, in the first happiness of their prosperous love; but they did not know the depth and the sweetness of love as it was known to these other two, who had also known the pain that, sooner or later, always comes of love. They had greatly suffered, but they were recompensed at last

RED AND WHITE ROSES.

BY MISS ELLIS CLARE.

CHAPTER I.

Two persons in a small drawing-room where shabby, ugly furniture was strangely mixed up with pretty china, good pictures, delicate work. Flowers, tastefully arranged in white or glass vases, stood on rickety, spindle-legged tables; cushions of bright soft colors lay on the faded scarlet moreen sofa and chairs, which were half hidden by lace couvrettes; and books and work were scattered here and there, giving a home look to an unhome-like room. All told the same tale to an experienced eye,—furnished lodgings occupied by a lady, their ugliness softened as far as good taste and some practice could soften it.

On a low cane chair near the window sat a young girl of eighteen, her pretty face flushed, her blue eyes cast down on a lovely white rose that she held in her hand. Near her, leaning in a careless attitude against the window, stood a man some five or six years older, his dark handsome face wearing a look of suppressed eagerness that told its own tale. May Elvers was living with her sister, Mrs. Armstrong, whose husband was Major in the regiment to which Everard Roberts belonged, and the two—Everard Roberts and May—had met almost every day for the last three months. They were in Jersey; and even there, where pretty girls abound, May was as much sought after as ever. Hers was a sweet face, with soft dark-blue eyes shaded by long upward-curling lashes, small rosy mouth, and fair blooming complexion, the whole crowned with rippling golden hair.

Everard Roberts had looked into the shy, bright face too often for his peace of mind. He knew now that it would never be long absent from his thoughts; and the knowledge brought no pain, for, the only son of a rich man, he was free to ask whom he chose to be his wife. He had seen May's color deepen as he approached her, had read rightly the extra carelessness of her voice and manner when she replied to him, and felt pretty sure of the answer to the question he ment to put; but man-like, being

tolerably confident, he hesitated. Now, watching the sweet, flushing face, he was very near the brink. She looked so fresh and fair in her soft muslin dress, her eyes fell so quickly when she tried to meet his!

"Will you wear it in your hair this evening?" he asked. "I got a white one on purpose that there should be no excuse about its not harmonizing with your dress, as there was last time."

"But my dress is all white," answered May, laughing. "I shall be all in white, like a bride."

"All the better," he exclaimed quickly; "I want to see how you will look as a bride. O May, my darling!"

He stopped short, drawing back hurriedly as the door opened to admit a gentleman who was announced as "Captain Close."

May Elvers rose to her feet, and advanced to meet the new-comer with a tremor and nervousness of manner owing to Everard's words, though the other mentally ascribed it to his own entrance.

"I have ventured to bring you some flowers for the ball tonight, Miss Elvers," he said, in a languid manner, presenting an exquisite bouquet of dark crimson roses and maiden-hair-fern; "will you accept them?"

He was a fair, handsome man of undecided age—he might have been thirty, or even forty—with a quiet, self-satisfied manner, owing to his being heir to a baronetcy and eight thousand a year. That any girl should refuse to accept the slightest attention from him never for a moment entered his head. Neither did May Elvers refuse his attentions. A craving for admiration was the weak point in her sweet character. She was very young, very pretty, and had quitted school but three months before, where the only men she ever saw were the snuffy old dancing-master and the stout greasy French and drawing master. Her eyes brightened as she took the roses, and her tone was hearty as she exclaimed,—

"Oh, thank you, Captain Close! How very lovely! They will look well with my white dress. I am so much obliged to you."

"May I claim the first waltz as a recom-

pense?" asked the other, stroking his golden mustache as he spoke to display a large diamond ring. "It will be heaping pleasure upon pleasure if you are so indulgent. You cannot imagine the delight it will be to see those flowers in your hand all the evening."

He spoke the words in a languid manner that belied their earnestness, and made young Roberts involuntarily clench his hand.

May Elvers laughed shyly and colored.

"Any other dance you like," she answered hurriedly. "I am engaged for the first waltz."

Captain Close turned his sleepy blue eyes on Everard Roberts, and raised his eyebrows.

"Ah! The energetic Roberts has been before me, I suppose? Must have got up in the middle of the night, my dear fellow! Nothing but Miss Elvers's charms could have drawn me out at this early hour; and now to find myself forestalled! Too bad, really!"

"O Captain Close! it is but just twelve o'clock!" answered May, laughing. "Annie went to market an hour ago. I expect her back every minute. I was wise for once, and reserved myself for this evening. I generally take a walk before I go to a ball."

"Beauty and wisdom combined! Well, Miss Elvers, give me the first galop, and we will sit it out together. I never dance one; they disarrange one's hair. And make one generally untidy and uncomfortable. Good-by now. Be sure you don't forget. I'm sorry not to have seen Mrs. Armstrong. Perhaps I shall meet her on my club-ward way."

"Very likely," answered May, ringing the bell. "She will come up Bath Street. Good-by." And the door closed behind the languid swell.

"What an insufferable ass!" burst out young Roberts almost before the Captain was out of hearing. "How can you be so civil to him? Confound his impudence! He thinks he has only to hold up his finger to any girl!"

May colored, and stood playing with her bouquet.

"Oh, no! I think it is all put on. Besides, people do make a great fuss with him. It is no wonder if he is rather conceited."

"Rather conceited! He is a walking mass of conceit and affectation! I should

like to have kicked him to the bottom of the stairs."

May laughed a joyous, hearty laugh; the last that broke from her for many a long day.

"You look as if you would! What a bloodthirsty being it is! What can I do to appease your majesty? I am absolutely frightened."

"Throw those confounded roses out of the window, or into the fireplace," exclaimed the young man, flushing angrily as she buried her pretty face among them once more. "I can't think how you could be so foolish as to take them."

May lifted her eyes in well-assumed surprise.

"What do you mean? Throw my lovely roses out of the window? Indeed I shall treasure them most carefully if the heat of the ball-room does not kill them this evening. They shall be put in this centre case, for I won't be so selfish as to keep them in my own room. They must have cost a lot of money, for they are all forced."

Everard Roberts looked at her for a few minutes in silence, and then began to pace the room with hasty steps, whilst May, a little anxious in reality, stood gazing at her flowers with her head on one side. Presently he stopped beside her, and stood, tall, upright, and manly, before her.

"I am in earnest, May," he said in a low, quick tone. "I cannot be trifled with. You know what I was going to say when he came in; but if you mean what you say — if you are going to wear his flowers, and sit out dances with him — I will never utter it. My wife shall belong to me only, and not be for the amusement of every fellow who chooses to pay her idle attentions. Which way is it to be?"

It was a rough wooing, and so May felt it to be. A great lump rose in her throat, and for some minutes she could not control her voice to speak calmly. Everard waited silently for her answer.

"I have promised Captain Close to wear his flowers and give him the first galop," she said at last in a careless tone; "and I do not see by what right you object to either. Captain Close has as much right to give me flowers as you have. I shall wear your rose in my hair as I promised, and perhaps put a crimson one with it. They will look lovely together."

She expected him to ask her then and there

to give the right to object to her wearing other men's gifts, and after a slight fencing she meant to give in. But Everard Roberts was too jealous and too angry to be a suppliant lover just then. He turned very pale and bit his lip.

"You may wear my rose or not, as you please," he returned. "What I ask is that you will not wear Captain Close's, and, if he asks why, let me answer him, and tell him you are no longer free to do so. 'Yes' or 'No,' May? Do you mean to wear them?"

The husky tones sank to a whisper as he put the question, and the dark eyes wore a wild, pleading look that would have altered her answer if she had seen it; but she did not. She heard the short, peremptory tone, and thought, "If I give in now, he will domineer over me all my life. I must hold my own, and he will soon come round."

"I never go back from my word," she said in a careless tone. "What I said to Captain Close I shall keep to;" and she moved as if to turn away.

Everard Roberts gave a short gasp, hesitated for one moment, and then, taking her hand, said hurriedly, —

"Be it so, then. I could not be happy with a flirt. Good-by, May." He wrung her hand, and, before she could speak or look up, had left the room.

May Elvers sat down in the nearest chair, feeling a little frightened. She did not like the sound of that good-by. Had she gone too far? Did he take her words as a real refusal? She had never had an offer of marriage, consequently retained a vague school notion that a man must very cautiously approach the subject, warming gradually as he neared it, till at last, in tones of intense eagerness, with every term of endearment, he put the question plainly, "Will you be my wife?" She knew well enough what Everard Roberts meant, and had guessed for some time past that he loved her; but still she expected something more definite, more tender; and, as she gazed wistfully at her white rose, she sighed, and thought, "He will make it up tonight. I will lead him on, and own I did it only to tease him." She started as the door opened; and there was a sound of disappointment in her voice as she exclaimed, —

"Oh, Annie, is that you? How you startled me!"

"I dare say I did," returned her sister, sinking into a chair, and taking off her hat. "Guilty people are easily frightened. I met poor young Roberts leaving the house, with such a face of misery and anger that I guess you have been behaving ill to him. What is the matter?"

"Nothing," answered May carelessly, re-arranging the flowers in the vase as she spoke. "He chose to put himself in a passion because I would not promise to throw Captain Close's flowers away and wear only his. Look! aren't these lovely? And the silly fellow told me to throw them out of the window, and wanted to kick the poor man down-stairs for bringing them to me. He really wants snubbing, and I'm very glad I was firm."

"No, you are not, for you are on the verge of crying," said her sister quietly. "May, you are a very silly child. Everard is not a man to be trifled with, and you are playing a dangerous game. I am quite sure you care for him, and I know he is heartily in love with you; and both George and I like him better than any man in the regiment. He has plenty of money and plenty of brains, but he won't stand much nonsense; so I am very much afraid you have gone a little too far with him. He is quite right. You have no business to encourage Captain Close and half a dozen others, when you mean nothing. You are a regular flirt already, I am sorry to say."

"I am nothing of the sort," answered May angrily. "Captain Close is better-looking, and a better match in every way, than Mr. Roberts; and perhaps I like him the better of the two, after all."

"And perhaps you don't," returned her sister, rising to leave the room. "And perhaps with your flirting you have lost the man you care for. He wished me good-by in a very marked manner; and I shall be surprised if we see him again for some time to come."

May sat with her sister's words ringing in her ears. A flirt. What an odious name! And she was not so very sure that she did not deserve it. She did often, from mere love of admiration, encourage men to pay her attentions, careless whether they suffered or not. Sometimes it was done to tease young Roberts and see his look of jealousy. But she owned that she liked to have half a dozen men after her wherever she went; to receive books, flowers, songs, tick-

ets for balls and concerts, and all the little attentions a pretty girl generally receives. "I am very young yet," she murmured. "It is hard if I may not have a little fun. Everard is very exacting; but still — to lose him! Ah, no! But that is not likely. He would not give me up so easily."

For all that, she was far from comfortable all day, and most anxious for the evening to arrive. She dressed herself with unusual care; and an involuntary smile of approval crossed her face as she caught sight of the results of her efforts in the glass. She had placed the white rose alone amid her glossy hair, and longed sorely to leave the bouquet at home, but pride would not let her. "It would seem like giving in so easily," she thought. "But I will leave them behind me at the ball if he behaves well; and that ought to satisfy him. My lovely roses!" But she did not smell them with the same satisfaction that she had appeared to do in the morning.

The dancing had long begun when she entered the room, — for Annie was far too skillful a general to allow her sister to be too early, — and May looked hurriedly round, but no Everard Roberts was to be seen. Several of the officers gathered about her to claim dances; name after name was put down on the card, till it looked unpleasantly full to its owner, who longed, but did not dare, to reserve some dances till the missing one appeared. She might have spared herself all anxiety. Captain Close drew near, and smiled complacently as his eyes fell on the flowers.

"How honored I feel!" he said languidly. "You should have put one in your hair also. I hardly expected you would have been allowed to bring them, that young fellow looked so savage. Good-looking fellow, Roberts, but too uppish, — wants snubbing now and then."

"Why don't you try the effect of some of your keen satire on him?" retorted May slightly, and fanning herself with a quick movement.

"No, thank you," returned her companion, caressing his whiskers. "Hot-tempered fellow, — just the sort of chap to knock you down without a moment's hesitation, which would be deuced unpleasant. Besides, he's the cleverest doctor in the regiment. Bad policy to quarrel with him, — might want his aid some day."

"Well, you'd better take care of yourself

for some time to come," said a young ensign named Edwards, who stood by; "for Roberts won't be here to cure you. He has got a month's leave, and is off to England by the first boat tomorrow."

"How do you know?" asked May quickly, her heart sinking with a presentiment that Annie was right.

"Because I met him just as he left the Colonel's house," replied young Edwards, "and he told me so; and I'm going to see him off when I leave here. His boat starts at four o'clock in the morning, by way of a cheerful time, so I sha'n't go to bed at all."

"I rather envy you," said May carelessly. "It would be much pleasanter in this lovely weather than going home to bed. Suppose we make a party and go and see him off. I wonder if Annie would."

"Awful lark! Let's ask her," exclaimed the boy, — he was little more. But with a sudden change of feeling May stopped him quickly.

"No," she said shortly. "I was only joking. Mr. Roberts's head would be quite turned by such a compliment, and, as Captain Close says, he is quite conceited enough already."

"I don't call him a bit conceited," declared the other. "He's the nicest fellow here, and I shall miss him awfully. He seemed regularly out of sorts and said he had had bad news. I hope he has n't lost any money."

"Ah, few things hit a fellow harder!" said Captain Close. "Don't like it myself. Roberts is well off, I believe?"

"Yes, lucky dog!" sighed young Edwards pathetically. "Oh, why did the cruel Fates make me one of seven? Miss Elvers, if Close is n't going to dance his dance with you, do give it to me."

"Be off, you young scamp!" exclaimed Captain Close. "Miss Elvers and I are going to sit out our dances, and don't want your company. Consider yourself very lucky to get any."

"Ah, you are getting on in years! Quite right to give up round dances, my dear fellow! They send the blood to the head after forty;" and with a mischievous laugh the young ensign moved away.

It was the longest evening May had ever known, and she felt excessively weary. She managed to dance the last dance with young Edwards, and said carelessly, —

"So you are really going to see Mr. Rob-

erts off? It's very kind of you. Wish him a pleasant holiday from me."

"All right. Anything else?" said the young man, detecting something in May's tone, and anxious to do all he could to set matters straight if they had gone wrong.

May hesitated.

"Yes—no." Then, with a wild fear that he might never return if he went away thus, she added quickly, "Yes: tell him that I prefer white roses to red. Don't forget."

"Trust me. Bother! The music has stopped, and here comes your sister. What a jolly ball it has been! I shall tell Roberts he was a muff not to come. Good-night, Miss Elvers. That galop was perfect. Good-night."

May gazed after him wistfully as he walked away. She would have given a great deal to accompany him. A whole month! What a long time it seemed!

CHAPTER II.

"May, will you come down the town with me this morning?" asked Mrs. Armstrong on the day after the ball.

May, leaning back in an easy-chair, slowly shook her head.

"No, thank you. I am much too tired. You must be made of cast-iron, Annie, to be able to do such a thing in this heat. I don't think I shall stir out of this chair all day."

"This is quite a new line," said Annie, lifting her eyebrows. "Has some one told you it is becoming to be lazy? You generally want to go down the town after a dance, and renew your flirtations. I am glad you are growing more steady." Then, with a bright smile and nod, she left the room, and May resumed her meditations.

They were not very pleasant ones. She felt worried and anxious, oppressed with a vague fear that Annie was right, and that she had gone too far. She reviewed the position, and frankly confessed to herself that she should be very angry if she heard that Everard Roberts was giving flowers to any other girl; then why should he not resent her receiving them from other men? She hoped that he would understand her message, and perhaps defer his journey for a day, or give it up altogether. Surely he would not care to go away if matters were set straight between them? Probably he would

come on this very morning to see her; and her cheeks crimsoned as she pictured the sweet reconciliation.

The door-bell rang, — a sharp, short ring, such as he always gave. She heard a man's voice at the door, a man's step on the stairs, and, snatching up a book, she became engrossed in its contents, whilst her heart beat so violently that she fancied that she could hear its throbs. Alas, poor May! Her hopes sank to zero as she lifted her eyes, to meet the frank, pleasant, but uninteresting gaze of young Edwards. Intuitively she knew that Everard had gone, and she wished — oh, how she wished that she had not sent the message!

"Miss Elvers, I'm awfully afraid to meet you," began the young man shyly. "I hope it was n't of any importance; for I never gave your message to Roberts, after all. Does it matter?"

"My dear Mr. Edwards, pray don't distress yourself," she answered carelessly. "How could it matter? It was a little dispute we had, and, woman-like, I wanted to have the last word. However, I don't feel flattered at being forgotten, for you must have forgotten me, or you would not have forgotten my message."

"I did n't indeed," replied the young fellow eagerly. "I should never have forgotten you or it; but it was like this. When I left the ball-room it was only three o'clock, — too early to go to the pier with Roberts, — so I beat up Somers, and made him sit up with me in my room, to smoke and keep each other awake; and we both fell asleep in our chairs and did n't wake till six, so I never saw Roberts off at all. I'm awfully relieved to hear it did n't matter, for I've been in a tremendous fright all the morning. I fancied somehow that you had had a quarrel, and that he was going away in consequence, and that!" —

He stopped, confused and coloring, and May broke into a merry laugh.

"What an imaginative creature it is!" she cried, fanning herself with her book. "I hope you have n't been imparting your fancies to the regiment in general, or I shall be afraid to leave the house for days to come."

"Miss Elvers, is it likely?" exclaimed the other indignantly. "What an ass you must think me!"

"No. I feel too lazy to think anybody anything this morning. I don't know when

I've been so tired after a dance. It is getting too hot now for dances. I shall give up going out for some months to come."

Charlie Edwards looked dismayed.

"Please don't. The dances would be awfully dull without you. We are talking of getting up a large picnic to Greve de Lecq next week, and finishing up with a dance in the evening. You must come. Please say you will."

"I don't know. Perhaps if it is a very cool day, and I have quite recovered from the effects of last night, I may; but I make no rash promises."

"Oh, yes, you'll come! I know you will," he said eagerly. "You would n't be so unkind as to spoil it all. But I'd better leave you now, as you are so tired. Good-by. I'm so glad it did n't matter about the message to Roberts;" and, with a hand-clasp that made May's delicate fingers tingle, he left her.

Poor May! She had borne it bravely; but she broke down now, and, covering her face with her hands, she sobbed as if her heart would break. She had lost Everard, — she felt sure of that. He meant to stay away till his love was dead; and she could do nothing to recall him. The Fates had been against her. If he had received her message, he would have understood it, and returned; but now the last chance was gone, and she was powerless. And till now she had not known how she loved him. Oh, how utterly dead and wearisome everything seemed!

May was sitting in a chair about a fortnight later, trying to fix her attention on the book she held in her hand, when her sister, with an unusual cloud on her bright face, entered the room.

"Really, May, you are very tiresome!" she exclaimed. "Could you not have fixed on somebody I liked less as a victim to your charms? I consider you have done the whole regiment an injury; and he was the only man I cared to have to attend the children. I know it is all your doing."

May laid down her book, and looked up at her sister with a radidly paling face.

"Speak out, Annie," she said quietly. "What is this terrible mischief I have done?"

"Well, it is really too tiresome," replied Mrs. Armstrong pettishly. "George has just told me that Everard Roberts has exchanged into another regiment, and is never

coming back to us; and I'm quite sure it is to avoid meeting you again, whatever you may say."

But May said nothing now. She gave a little cry, and, to Annie's horror and amazement, fell back fainting in her chair.

Her unconsciousness lasted only a few minutes. Before Mrs. Armstrong could call anybody, or do anything but wring her hands, and sob wildly, "O May, darling! speak to me!" she had opened her eyes again.

"Don't tell, Annie, please," she whispered, as soon as her white lips could frame the words. "I did not mean to be so silly."

"It is all some wretched misunderstanding then?" said her sister. "Why did n't you tell me? and I would have set matters straight. It may not be too late now. Shall I write or telegraph to him to come here and speak to you?"

"No, — oh, no!" replied May, a tinge of red showing in her pale face. "I would not for worlds try to recall him now. He could not have cared for me as I thought he did, or he would not have given me up so easily. It is all over now, and I will set to work to forget him. Please don't speak of him again to me, Annie. I am very sorry I was so silly."

And so it ended, and May braced herself to carry a brave face before the world. By degrees people remarked that she was growing quieter and graver; but the change was very gradual, and nobody ever guessed the cause.

CHAPTER III.

Five years later. May, prettier, in the fuller beauty of twenty-three, than she had been in the freshness of eighteen, was seated in a shady little garden at Parkhurst, teaching her little nephew his letters. But Harry's blue eyes wandered after every butterfly that flitted past in the June sunshine, and his fair head went down very often upon his aunt's knee. May was getting somewhat weary of the uphill work.

"O Harry," she exclaimed, as he dropped his head and yawned for the fiftieth time, "you really are a very idle little boy! At this rate you will never learn to read."

Harry stretched himself, and laughed saucily.

"I think I'd better not, auntie," he said slowly. "Papa always says I'm happier

than he is, or any grown-up person, and they can all read; so I think I'd better not learn, — don't you?"

"No, I don't, you lazy boy!" answered May, laughing. "Here comes mamma, so we'll ask her, and see if she's not ashamed of her son."

Annie, plump, bright, and blooming, the picture of an English matron, came toward them, with a look of excitement on her pretty face.

"O May," she exclaimed, "I am so pleased! Whom do you think I met just now? Your old lover, Everard Roberts! He arrived here last night, and is hardly altered at all, only a little browner and older-looking. He has been all this time in India, and has come home now for six months. He asked me if you were still with me, and looked surprised to hear that you were."

May reddened slightly, and stroked Harry's smooth cheek.

"Is he married?" she asked, in a tone of quiet interest.

"Oh, I don't know! No, I don't think so," answered Annie, "or he would have said so. No, I am sure he is not. I was so glad to see him again; he was always such a favorite of mine, and of George too. I never was so cross with you as when you drove him away. Don't do it again, if you please."

Annie was good-natured, and would have been very vexed with herself if she had guessed how much pain she was giving her sister by her thoughtless words; but she had quite forgotten the scene in the drawing-room at Jersey, when May had allowed her secret to escape, and her thoughts had gone back to her original conviction, that May had flirted with him, led him on, and then refused him. May saw how it was, and was thankful.

"I am not likely to have anything to do with Mr. Roberts," she answered gravely.

And Annie, seeing the cloud, stooped and kissed her, saying penitently, —

"No, dear; you are a good girl, and never flirt now. I told Mr. Roberts that you had grown so quiet he would not know you."

She turned and went in; and May sat still, thinking. She was vexed and frightened to find how the news had affected her, how wildly her heart beat at the thought of meeting him. For five years she had not seen him or heard of him. He might have

wife and children by this time, — probably had. What was it to her if he had? She would not think about him, she told herself, and then sat dreaming for nearly an hour over the old scenes, — the picnic where they had wandered off alone together; the sail by moonlight, when he had held her hand in his, unseen by all the others; the last well-remembered scene in the drawing-room; and the ring of his happy laugh, the low tones of his dear voice, the loving look of the deep-set brown eyes, were all as fresh and vivid as ever. Ay, she loved him still; and now, if he had brought home a wife, it would kill her!

She would not think of it. Rising resolutely, she went into the cottage. The Armstrongs did not live in the barracks. Annie had three children, and preferred a house of her own; and the Major could well afford to gratify his wife's wish. May went in, and sat down to practice singing, strong in her determination not to think.

There was to be a small dance that evening at one of the officer's rooms, and perhaps she should meet him there, and be able to judge for herself as to how far she was remembered. It was a hard struggle; her heart would now and then give a great bound at the thought that they would meet again after all these years. Presently Annie came in, her baby in her arms.

"May dear," she said, "do put on your hat, and go and look for Harry. He has run out all alone, — probably gone to the barracks, — and I don't know what mischief he may be in. George doesn't like him to be so much with the men."

May rose, and, shutting the piano, did as her sister asked her. She went across the road, and into the field that lay between their house and the barracks; and there her journey ended, for before her, lying flat on his back, one foot on knee, and his hands clasped behind his head, was Master Harry, subjecting a boy of his own age, or perhaps a little younger, to a severe cross-examination, — a little pale-faced boy, with sweet, pleading eyes, that, as she approached, were lifted to May's face as if imploring protection.

"That's only Aunt May. You need n't look so frightened," remarked the young bully. "You look as if you thought everybody was going to kick you. Go on. How long have you been in India? My father's the Major, and you've got to answer me

I always find out all about the new people for him."

"I don't know," answered the child submissively,—"always, I suppose. I don't remember any other place."

"He says his name is Roberts, and they came here the day before yesterday," said Harry, raising himself on one elbow, and addressing his aunt. "I heard mamma talking about his father to you just now, did n't I, auntie?"

May's heart stood still. It was all over, then!

"I don't know, Harry," she said; and then to the child, "Is your father a doctor? What is his other name?"

"Papa's name is Everard Roberts," answered the boy, with the same pleading look, "and mine is Eustace. We are just come from India."

May did not say more to the child. She felt as if words would bring tears with them. Presently, with a strange, abrupt manner, she said,—

"Come home with me, Harry. Your mother wants you."

She wanted to get away from the child. There was nothing in the small pale face, the fair hair, and large blue eyes to remind her of his father; and she sickened as she thought, "He is like his mother; and hers must be a sweet face,—a face any man might love."

She did not want to know whether that mother was alive or not. Everard might be a widower, but it was all the same to her. He must have conquered all love for her before he married another woman, and love once dead could never be revived. With all the jealousy of a deep-feeling nature, she could not bring herself to be the wife of a man who had had another wife. She must be first and foremost, all and everything. And the face of that boy's mother was not likely to pass away from the memory of one who had loved her. Those pleading, sad blue eyes were haunting her as she walked silently home again with Harry. She hoped now, more ardently than she could say, that she should not meet Everard; that he would not be at the dance that night.

Pleading a headache, which she meant to make the excuse for staying at home in the evening, she spent the afternoon in crushing out the love that had held its own for so many years through absence, silence, and change of scene. Consequently, when An-

nie came into her room toward evening, saying, "Well, May dear, is the head well enough to let you go to Major Greig's dance tonight?" the answer was, "Yes, I mean to go; and, Annie, will you cut me some crimson roses to wear in my hair? I want some particularly." She wished to see if he remembered, and to prove to him, if it might be, that the white rose would be worn no more.

It was late when the two ladies entered the room, and one swift glance around showed May the well-remembered strong, tall figure leaning against the wall at the opposite side of the room. Apparently he had been watching for them, for he came straight toward them as soon as they were inside the door. She heard the deep voice saying, "How do you do, Mrs. Armstrong? It is such a treat to see your face again. Ne friend like an old friend!" And, angry and disappointed to find how fast and strongly her heart was beating, she turned away quickly to give her card to "odious little Captain Steen," who, astonished at her unusual readiness, took advantage of it to write his name down for at least half a dozen dances. His face fell, though, when May, glancing at the card as he returned it, said coldly,—

"Thank you, Captain Steen; any two of those dances you like, but I never give more to any partner."

Then, as he, with many complaints, crossed his name through, she heard Mr. Roberts say at her elbow,—

"Miss Elvers, have you quite forgotten me?"

How pale he had grown, how grave and quiet, she thought, as she looked calmly into his face once more. She saw him glance at the roses in her hair and hand, and knew that he remembered; but she could not read his face, could not tell whether it gave him any pain to see them there.

"No, Mr. Roberts," she answered quietly. "I do not easily forget. Besides, Annie told me she had met you; and Harry has been making acquaintance with your little boy today."

His face changed slightly at the last sentence, and he half sighed, but checked himself.

"Poor little Eustace!" he said in a low voice. "I wish he would associate with other boys. He lives too much alone with me, and it is not good for him. I hope

Harry will take him under his wing, and draw him out."

She was dead then, the mother with the sad sweet face, and May would be spared the pang of meeting her! But she understood now why he was so quiet and grave; and a wild twinge of jealousy made her tone hard and cold as she answered, —

"He did not seem to relish the drawing-out today. It is a great pity for a boy to be so shy and timid as he seems to be."

The cloud deepened on his face as he replied quickly, —

"A thousand pities, but hardly to be wondered at in his case. It is to be hoped he will grow out of it in time. However, nobody who knows him can help loving him."

May did not answer. What could she say? Presently he said, —

"My dancing days are over, thanks to a shot in the knee; but may I ask, under the circumstances, whether you will sit one dance out with me? The room is too full for there to be much pleasure in dancing."

"I am afraid I cannot do that," answered May coldly. "There are many more gentlemen than ladies; it would not be fair. I shall be happy to go in to supper with you, if you like."

He gave her a long, searching look; and May, feeling it, with a careless air scanned the room.

"Thank you," he said gravely; "but I must go before then, as I am still in the doctor's hands, and am not allowed to be up late."

May glanced at him quickly.

"Have you been ill? Or is it the wounded knee?" she asked.

"I have had a bad bout of fever. My head is beginning to feel queer already with the heat of the room, so I think I will wish you good-night and go home, as there is evidently nothing to be gained by staying."

The last words were uttered in an undertone as he turned away; but May caught them, and wondered what they meant.

The evening was dull and flat to her after he was gone, as the excitement of the showing how little she cared for him was over; and she felt thankful that Annie, anxious about her baby, left as early as politeness would allow.

CHAPTER IV.

They had met again! May sat in her usual seat in the garden on the following afternoon, thinking, and telling herself that she would not think. At one moment she made up her mind steadily to avoid him, or, if thrown into his society, to treat him with the same coldness that she had shown on the preceding evening; in the next, she resolved to be friends, to show an interest in him and his little boy, taking good care that her motives should not be mistaken. At length, annoyed with herself for her weakness, she rose, and, going into the house, put on her hat, and started on one of her favorite long, solitary rambles, — through the fields, where great lazy sheep lay panting in the July heat, and cows turned their dreamy brown eyes on her, as if wondering how anybody could be foolish enough to walk on such an afternoon; through the standing corn, which began to droop its heavy head with the swelling grain, — to a cool shady copse she had discovered; and there, hot and exhausted, she seated herself at the foot of a spreading beech-tree, to enjoy the quiet, — a quiet alive with delicious sounds. At a few feet from her a tiny brooklet trickled past; the wood-pigeon and turtle-dove kept up a soothing duet overhead; a fat bumble-bee was buzzing about the bells of a neighboring fox-glove; whilst a cuckoo in a field hard by kept up a continued "Cuckoo-cuckoo." May took off her hat, and, leaning her head against the mossy trunk behind her, heaved a long sigh of content. She closed her eyes, the better to take in all the sounds around, and in five minutes was fast asleep. How long she slept she did not know, but she woke with a start to find Everard Roberts standing before her, gazing at her with a thoughtful face.

"I hope I did not wake you, Miss Elvers," he said, smiling, as with a scared face and flushing cheeks she looked up at him. "This was a favorite haunt of mine in old days, and I came to see if it still existed, little expecting to meet you here. May I stay, now that I have come?"

He did not wait for her answer, but sat down by her.

May tried to feel annoyed, and knew that she did not succeed.

"I have no power to grant or withhold permission," she answered carelessly. "If

I get tired of you, I can go away, but I cannot send you away."

"I should be very sorry to disturb you," he said gravely. "I shall watch your countenance carefully, and at the first cloud rise and leave you promptly. What have you been doing all these years? I little expected ever to see Miss Elvers again."

"Perhaps not," May returned, coloring. "Gentlemen always imagine girls are going to marry at the first opportunity; but I prefer my freedom, — at all events, for some time to come. The day may arrive when I shall succumb, as others have done before me; but I think it is distant as yet."

"I think you are wise," he remarked, pulling a tiny flower to pieces, without looking at her. "It must be a terrible thing to be bound for life to another with perhaps every taste and feeling different from your own. 'Till death us do part' must ring like the knell of happiness in the ears of thousands, I fancy."

May looked at him curiously. There was such a depth of feeling in his tone that the conviction forced itself upon her that he was thinking of his own case. Perhaps, in spite of the sad pleading eyes, the mother of little Eustace had not quite won his heart, had not made him happy. She did not answer, and for some minutes there was a dead silence. She longed to hear about his marriage, — when it had taken place, how long his wife and he had lived together, how long she had been dead.

He looked up presently, and, meeting her eyes, smiled, and said, —

"Well?"

"Nothing," replied May, crimsoning; then, hesitating, "I wanted to hear — that is, you said it was no wonder your little boy was grave and timid. Has he only just lost his mother?"

"It is three years ago now;" and, as he spoke, she noticed that he was not in mourning. "But the circumstances were so terrible that I fear it will take many years to dispel their effects. Shall I tell you all about it?"

May nodded, and he went on in a quiet, sad tone, —

"I don't care to talk about it, — it is a sorrow that will darken my life; but I think I may trust you, and it will do me good to tell it once. When I exchanged regiments, I did not much care where I went, and had

nearly made up my mind to sell out altogether, when I met by chance a man named Danvers, who had been my greatest chum at school and at Sandhurst. His father's estate joined ours, and we had been like brothers till he went to India about two years before. When I told him all my — uncertainty, he persuaded me to exchange with a man in his regiment, who was anxious to remain in England; and, only too glad to be with Danvers once more, I readily consented, and went out with him and his wife two months afterward. I think Mrs. Danvers was one of the sweetest women that ever gladdened a man's heart, as she was one of the loveliest. They had one child, a baby then, to whom I stood godfather. Every day of my life was passed with them; and I leave you to imagine how dear they became to me, when everything in life seemed dark and dreary. Then came the mutiny, and every man's life was in his hands, — every man's blood boiling with fresh accounts of horrors. My anxiety was all for Mrs. Danvers and the child; but our part seemed quiet, and they had a man-servant whom they trusted completely. I had my misgivings, however; the man had a sly leer in his eye which I detected more than once as he watched his mistress. Then came a terrible day, — even now my blood runs cold as I think of it. I was asleep in my bungalow, and awoke with the sounds of pistol-shots and general disturbance. Before I could snatch up my revolver the curtain was pushed aside, and Danvers came in, his child in his arms, covered with blood, his eyes wild, his face full of an unspeakable horror. He put his child in my arms, saying hoarsely, 'Take care of him, Roberts! I cannot survive today; and his mother is in heaven!' and, before I could utter a word, or collect my thoughts, shot himself through the heart, and lay dead at my feet."

He stopped, and covered his face with his hands, as if to shut out the horrible sight.

May, a strange light bursting in upon her, cried, —

"And that was Eustace? He is not your own child?"

He looked up with a peculiar expression, almost of reproach, in his face.

"My own child! Did you think that I was married?"

"Yes; that is, he said he was your child," stammered May, crimsoning without know-

ing why, and nervously twisting the ribbon of her hat.

He looked at her long and silently, and then said quietly, —

"No: I am not married. I think Eustace is losing the recollection of his father and mother by degrees; but the shock and horror of that day still hang over him."

"It was very terrible," returned May, her heart bounding with a strange joy that as yet she dared not analyze. "Poor little fellow! I shall try to be great friends with him. It was the servant, I suppose?"

"The very man I mentioned. Poor Danvers! I can never love another man as I loved him. He was brave as a lion, gentle and loving as a woman, — ay, far more so than most women;" and he smiled bitterly at the last words.

May rose to her feet.

"I must go home now," she said abruptly. "Good-by."

She held out her hand as she spoke, and he took it without hesitation. It was the first time their hands had met since that memorable day in the drawing-room at Jersey; and May with difficulty repressed the thrill that ran through her as those firm, hard fingers closed round hers.

"Good-by, Miss Elvers. I shall stay here for a quiet pipe, if you are not afraid to return alone," he said, smiling. "My knee does not allow me to do much in the walking line as yet. This is the longest walk I have taken for many months."

"I am so sorry. I would rather you did not come with me," she answered hurriedly. "I have always walked home alone before, so I do not see why I should be afraid tonight. It is only half-past six," glancing at her watch; and, with a brighter smile than she had given him yet, she left him, and hurried away.

How bright the world looked as she walked home through the evening sunlight! How sweetly the birds were singing! For Everard Roberts was single; and something at May's heart told her, that, in spite of the quiet friendliness of his manner, the old love was not quite dead yet.

CHAPTER V.

"O Annie! what do you think?" exclaimed May that evening, hurriedly entering her sister's room after they had come

up to bed, her face full of the direst consternation. "I have lost my watch! The chain is broken, and the watch gone! What shall I do?"

"My dear May, where can you have dropped it?" asked her sister, with a face of equal concern. "Perhaps it is only downstairs."

"No: I have been down and hunted everywhere. It is not in the house. I remember looking at it out in the fields, and I have not seen it since."

"But how strange that you did not notice your chain was hanging loose!" said Annie, examining the broken portion.

"It was not hanging loose," answered May quickly. "That is just the thing. My watch-pocket is worn through, and the watch must have dropped when I put it back, and broken the chain by its weight, the chain remaining in the pocket whilst the watch fell to the ground. It is that hair chain of dear mamma's hair, and it was getting worn out, but would have lasted some time longer, but for the torn pocket. O dear, I am so vexed!"

"We must offer a reward. You may find it yet," said Annie encouragingly.

"Perhaps," returned May, with a sigh. "I shall tell Jane to call me as soon as she wakes, and go and look for it where I was. It is a quiet path through the fields, with very few passers-by. Good-night, Annie."

And with a disconsolate face she returned to her room.

She did not say what her chief hope was, — that Everard Roberts might have seen it on his homeward way, — for she had not told Annie of her meeting with him. Still, anxious not to lose a chance, she rose as soon as she was called on the following day, and wended her way, with eager, downcast eyes, across the fields toward the copse where she had sat on the previous day. How lovely it was that bright summer morning, the trees casting long shadows across the dewy grass, and the cattle, refreshed by the cool night, busily cropping the fresh wet food! May stood still once to listen to a lark, that, starting up from her very feet, soared away far into the clear blue vault, pouring out his long liquid song of happiness and thanksgiving; then, with a heart almost as light, she turned to enter the copse, and uttered a cry of horror as her eyes fell on the lifeless, prostrate form of Everard Roberts, lying before her. His hat

was off, his clothes were sodden with the heavy dew, his hair, damp and heavy with it, fell from his white upturned face, revealing a deep gash across his forehead, round which the crimson blood had clotted, dark and thick.

Sick with terror and misery, May knelt down by the still, stiff form, and lifted his head on to her lap. She could not cry; only a moan or two of bitter anguish broke from her as she laid her hand on his heart, and then with her handkerchief wiped the damp white face. Everard's watch, ring, and pin were gone, showing that he had been attacked, probably unawares, by some ruffian who had seen him alone in the wood. May bent her head, and pressed her lips again and again to the cold cheek.

"O Everard, my darling," she moaned, "have I lost you again? Oh, why must I live on when you are gone? Would to Heaven that I could die now, for my heart is almost broken! Oh, why did I leave you last night? If I had only told you of my love! But now you can never know, — never, never!"

Suddenly she uttered a loud cry. The dark eyes had opened and were looking into hers. Presently a faint voice, the voice she had thought hushed forever, said, "My darling, is it you?" And, faint and low as the accents were, they rang in her ears like sweetest music. He still lived, and still loved her; and hot tears of utter happiness fell upon his face.

"Leave me, darling," he murmured faintly, "and go for help. I cannot move. Go to the barracks, and tell them."

"But you will die whilst I am gone," she sobbed. "O my own! what shall I do? Why did I leave you here? Everard, Everard, I have always loved you. Say you forgive me before I leave you. I cannot go till I hear you say it."

"I forgive? It is you who must."

He closed his eyes, and fainted again; and May, wild with terror, laid his head gently on the ground, and hurried away to summon aid. In less than half an hour she was back again, with several of the soldiers carrying a hammock; and Everard, still senseless, was lifted into it, and borne back to the barracks.

And now began the fight. The long hours of pain and exposure to the heavy dew had brought back the fever; and the pain of Everard's wounded knee, freshly in-

jured in his fall, had augmented the danger. Day after day May waited and prayed, whilst the reports of the doctors were always "Much the same." Then came the long, heavy sleep that was to end in death or restore him to life; and Annie and May sat by his side in the small, hot room, waiting!

Lying at the foot of the bed, worn out with an anxiety too great for his years, was little Eustace, fast asleep; and the only ray that life held, if she lost Everard, was the determination to which May had come to take the little fellow for her own.

It was evening. The soldiers, with their coats off, were lounging idly about, every noise hushed in consideration of the sick man: one only, as he groomed a horse, was softly singing "Annie Laurie;" and to her dying day May never heard that song again without feeling ill. The heavy, regular breath of the two sleepers, the tick of the clock on the drawers, the buzzing of a blue-bottle at the window, were the only sounds. Annie, in spite of her anxiety, was dozing; and May, with her eyes fixed on the flushed, handsome face that might so soon be gone forever from her gaze, sat watching for the change, her lips praying softly from time to time.

She held her breath as the dark eyes opened at last, and, full of bewildered delight, looked at her.

"May, is it you, my own darling?" he whispered faintly.

And, as her fingers closed round the cool damp hand, and she knew that the danger was over, May Elvers fell upon her knees by the bedside, and thanked Heaven.

A month later, in spite of Annie's eager remonstrances that it was much too quick, — in spite of the doctor's assertion that his patient was not equal to it, — May and Everard were married.

"I'm quite aware that I am not well yet," was the latter's laughing answer to all that the doctor urged; "but, tell me, who is so good a nurse as a wife? You wish me to go home for change and rest, and I can't go alone, not being fit to take care of myself or Eustace. I have had enough of separation to last my life."

And May was equally obstinate. Her only answer to Annie's entreaties and remonstrances was, —

"I can't help it, Annie. I dare not lose sight of him again. I have lost so many years of happiness as it is."

So one lovely morning in the middle of August, the little barrack chapel was gayly decked with flowers and crowded with soldiers. A pale, thin man, supporting himself with a stick, and a fair, beautiful girl in white, wreathed with orange-blossoms and white roses, stood before the altar, and were made one. Tiny Maud Armstrong, aged three and a half, was the only bridesmaid, and Eustace the groomsman; whilst Annie, beaming with delight, in spite of the

hurried marriage and consequent absence of all display, stood close by, and Major Armstrong gave the bride away.

That was many years ago now; and Everard and May, with three or four tiny editions of themselves, are living quietly in their own home, having had enough of the army; and May has never ceased for one hour to rejoice in her choice for life of white roses.

RIGHT AT LAST.

BY MISS CAMILLA WILLIAM.

CHAPTER I.

"A fairer maid than me, Huntin!
A fairer maid than me!
A maiden half sae fair as me
Your eyes did never see!"

I am sorry that Lute Houghton wasn't as brilliant in mind as she was in person, for then Mrs. Farnham could point to her as one perfect example of the entire superiority of woman over man. Imagine poetry dropping like honey, wit scintillating like summer lightning, and the jewels of wisdom shining—all from those lips, pink as the lip of a sea-shell, and so beautifully curved that the Grand Turk himself would forgive her for being at once metaphysical and scientific. Fancy that little hand where the pearls are scarcely distinguishable from the pearly skin—fancy that writing a magazine article! It quite takes away one's breath to think of it. But there, as I have intimated, such a combination of perfections exists only in the imagination, for Lute was like a flower that perisheth.

"A soul, doubtless, is immortal,—where a soul can be discerned."

But never having perceived any indications that this lovely creature had an indwelling Psyche, my theory is that when she dies she will go where the dead flowers go.

And, if I may be allowed a little digression, I don't think that souls are very wholesome things for bodies to have. Did you ever know a genius with a fresh complexion? Talents of a high order are nearly always sallow, dyspeptic, wrinkled before their time, have palpitation, headaches, hollow cheeks. I know but one philanthropist who is healthy looking, and his humanity is more of the brain than the heart. To quote a witty Frenchman, "He has as good a heart as can be made out of brains;" but not enough to trouble his digestion.

So that, on second thought, I need not so much deplore Miss Houghton's deficiencies, the less that had she been witty I should have no story to tell.

For then Royal Marsh might have been in love with her, and not merely had his eyes dazzled. As it was, the rings of her

pale yellow hair caught him in their glittering mesh; the voice was so sweet and flute-like that he did not listen to the words; and the smile set such distracting curves and dimples in motion, and revealed such snowy jewels of teeth, that it never occurred to him to look for expression. Besides, there were indescribable arms, shoulders, hands, and feet.

"And the blue eye,
Dear and dewy,
And that infantine fresh air of hers!"

It was enough to dazzle any man with eyes. And Mr. Royal Marsh had a pair of fine gray eyes, clear-sighted ordinarily, and beautifully expressive, albeit their speech and brilliance was nearly wasted on law books, ledgers, and dry public documents. Over these last came presently floating blots of gold, pink, blue, and milk-white, with airy flings of muslin and ribbon. Mr. Marsh thought himself bilious, and took bitters. The symptoms increased, the bewitching little chaos took form, and Miss Lute Houghton smiled up at him from regiments of figures, and from under the Lord Chancellor's wig. At this crisis Mr. Marsh was forced to own that he must be in love; and, in truth, he found the position to be not a disagreeable one. He had begun to suspect that his life was not quite satisfactory. High position, wealth, and accomplishments were very well, but something more was needed for happiness, and he discovered that that something was love. Though by no means conceited, Mr. Marsh certainly did not suffer tortures of doubt as to his final success. He had been too much flattered and sought for by the ladies for that. Indeed, his fear had been that he should some day be taken possession of and married in spite of himself, and he had almost won the reputation of a woman-hater through his defensive precautions.

Lute Houghton had a little repertoire of coquettish airs, which were very pretty till one got tired of them, a thing not unlikely to happen, for they were no more numerous than the notes of a robin, and had not their merit of naturalness. She played these off upon her stately adorer, tormented him for a week or two, till he lost both

sleep and appetite; then at length, when he was nearly frantic, she put her small white hand in his, and looking in his face with a shy glance, lisped out,

"If you want it so much, why, you may have it."

Royal Marsh stood transfixed for a moment, absolutely pale with half-incredulous rapture, then turned and left a trembling kiss on Agnes Jameson's hand.

Agnes was a quiet, brunette cousin of Lute's, and had befriended Mr. Marsh in a tacit way in his courtship. He was too much agitated now to notice the crimson cheek which bloomed out as she shrank from his salute, or the frown and surprise with which his lady-love regarded it. He kissed her cousin's hand as he would have kissed the hem of Lute's garment, not daring to venture nearer his divinity, but feeling obliged to vent his adoration and gratitude on something connected with her.

Agnes understood and appreciated the lover's delicacy; but as she started away, and left them alone, an inexplicable feeling thrilled her soul. She had honored and admired this man, and though surprised at his infatuation for her cousin, she recollected her first impression when Lute, who was her father's ward as well as niece, had come to live with them; the delight with which she had watched and waited on her, and the enthusiastic love with which she had regarded her. Perhaps Mr. Marsh found in her perfections superior to prettiness, and may be her own disaffection toward her cousin was an unworthy feeling. At all events, she would not for an instant doubt his superior discernment. So she reasoned, and she acted accordingly, assisting him as far as she could, praising him to Lute, and enlarging on those advantages of his which she knew would have most weight with her cousin—his beautiful estate, and the fact that all the ladies wanted him.

Agnes had gone quietly enough through all this till the last moment. Then—no man had ever kissed her hand before—at the touch of his lips a bud which had already been trembling with its own fullness in her heart suddenly quivered to its inmost petal and burst into flower. She was overpowered with a fragrance and sweetness as new as it was delicious. How bright and beautiful those two looked to her standing there plighted! Lute, with the sun gilding her yellow hair; Royal Marsh, with such

sunlight in his eyes. There was no feeling of envy or discontent in her heart, but an excess of vague delight. A glory seemed to have surmounted and enveloped her from their shining, and she had nothing to regret or to ask.

Such a moment comes but once in a life; to some it never comes. For it is the unsealing of the fountains of the heart which rise in rainbows, too rejoicing in this new being to ask whose hand broke the seal, or what may be the cost of such freedom. Some hearts are dry cisterns.

"You seem to be very much in love with—with Agnes Jameson," pouted Lute, withdrawing the hand that she had given him, and turning a babyish white shoulder upon him, just enough for him to see the dimple in it.

"Do you mean it, Lute?" he asked, getting breath at last. "Do you give me this hand for my own? Will you marry me? shall I be your husband? will you be my wife?" contemplating the extatic possibility in all its relations.

Lute Houghton laughed, and by some special grace also blushed a little.

"So many questions!" she cried. "I can't remember. You'll have to write them down."

"I will ask one, then. Do you love me, Lute?"

"I think you're rather nice," she admitted, moderately. "Now let's go and dance."

"Stay a moment, sweet. You know I never dance."

"Then you must learn immediately if you hope to please me. Otherwise I shall dance with others and make you jealous."

"One moment. You promise to be my wife?"

"Perhaps I will, if you won't make an old woman of me."

"Angel!"

"Now I want to dance with your cousin Charlie. What lovely curly hair he has!"

In five minutes Lute was whirling in the waltz on Charlie Marsh's arm, her yellow curls mingling with his dark ones, listening well pleased to his flatteries.

The lover found no fault with this, but watched her with delighted eyes. It was proper that she should be intimate with his relations. Besides, he was enchanted with her shy acceptance of him, and the manner in which she had avoided avowing her affec-

tion for him. "Strong feelings are not so easily expressed," he thought, and watched her lovely form as it swam about on the music, like a feather on the air.

In the course of a few days this engagement became public, somewhat to the surprise of Mr. Marsh, who found himself assailed with congratulations before he dared to think that he was sure of his prize. He forgot that everybody knew that diamond ring that his grandmother, an Italian lady, had brought over the seas, and that Lute left her glove off to show; and he was not aware that that young woman was not averse to boast of her conquest.

"Such a coming down for the grand Mr. Marsh!" cried Nelly Bly. "We all thought he must marry a Sappho or a Corinne; and he has gone and"—

"You're speaking of my cousin," said Agnes, coldly.

"Excuse me, Aggie! But you know as well as I do that she's just such a woman as they paint on wine and fancy-soap advertisements. Her head might as well be used for a cap-block for anything there is in it."

"Speak of angels and you'll hear the rustling of their wings," said a bystander, as Mr. Marsh entered the room, with Lute hanging on his arm.

"O Mr. Marsh!" cried Nelly, from the piano, "here's the most comical little Scotch song! Do you like those outlandish songs? But then this might have been written for these times and here."

"Let us hear your song," he said, happiness arming him with a celestial mail that was proof against her spiteful thrusts.

"Tibbie Fowler o' the glen,
There's ower mony woolin' at her,
Tibbie Fowler o' the glen,
There's ower mony woolin' at her,
Woolin' at her, pu'in' at her,
Courtin' at her, canna get her;
Silly elf, 'tis for her pelf
That a' the lads are woolin' at her.

"Ten cam east, and ten cam west,
Ten cam rowin' o'er the water;
Twa cam down the lang dyke side,
There's twa and thirty woolin' at her.

"There's seven but, and seven ben,
Seven in the pantry wi' her;
Twenty head about the door,
There's ane and forty woolin' at her.

Woolin' at her, pu'in' at her,
Courtin' at her, canna get her;
Silly elf, 'tis for her pelf
That a' the lads are woolin' at her."

"And sometimes," added Nelly, innocently, "men are situated just like Tibbie Fowler."

Royal Marsh smiled unhurt. That little fairy on his arm had no thought of his money, he was positive; but he could not be so sure of Nelly Bly.

CHAPTER II

"But for loving, why, you would not, Sweet,
Though we prayed you,
Paid you, brayed you
In a mortar—for you could not, Sweet."

Probably thirty days is the longest period during which the most imaginative and enthusiastic individual can remain in an ecstasy. Which accounts for the fact that after about four weeks Mr. Royal Marsh drew a long breath, seemed to open his eyes, and looked about him with the faintest possible sensation of relapse. That was the time for Miss Lute to bring up her reserved forces; but, alas! she had none. She had played off all the little airs, said all her coquetish sayings, and there was nothing to repeat herself. Besides, she was tired. Mr. Marsh didn't suit her. She infinitely preferred his young cousin Charlie, who was desperately in love with her, and whom she daily expected to hear had killed himself on her account. Royal was dreadfully old—nearly thirty-two—and he was sublime; would talk of books, and quote poetry to her, and seemed to think that she knew oil from water-colors. It was fatiguing. But the way Charlie Marsh danced was ravishing; and what pretty boots he wore! Besides, again, she was worn out with Cousin Agnes. Agnes scolded her from morning till night, berated her, found fault with her, acted altogether in a most peculiar and disagreeable manner.

"You and Royal are two old humdrums!" she cried. "If it wasn't for his money, I would give him to you. You would just suit him; Charlie says so; and he says you have no right to scold me as you do. He says you would be very glad of a lover yourself."

"What Charlie Marsh says or thinks is of little consequence whatever," said Agnes,

quietly, but with a heightened color. "He is a very inferior person. But I should suppose that a mere feeling of gratitude towards Mr. Marsh, who has done so much for him, and without whom he would be penniless, would refrain him from pursuing you, even if he has no other principle."

"You know nothing whatever of what a man will do when he is in love," retorted Miss Houghton, with some warmth. "They are perfectly carried away, and think of only that one person. And as to Charlie being inferior, you are very much mistaken. I consider him far superior to Royal, and if he were as rich, I would jilt Royal and marry him."

"Have you told him so?" asked Agnes, in an undertone.

"Why, no, not exactly," stammered Lute.

"Are you aware, Lute, that if Mr. Marsh knew this he wouldn't have you, if you went on your knees to him?"

"Are you going to tell him?" asked Lute, in some alarm.

"It would be like me to tell him!"

"Because he wouldn't believe you if you did. Or if he did believe you, it would make no difference. I would only have to give him a kiss, and coax him a little."

Agnes shrank, and grew pale.

Lute laughed, and brushed out a little ringlet, to drop carelessly over her gem of an ear, where it hung like a twisted sun-beam. "Don't you worry about my affairs, Aggie. I'm going to marry Royal when I get ready, and I dare say I shall make him a very good wife. Of course I sha'n't allow Charlie to talk love to me then, however much he may love me. And of course I can't help it if gentlemen do find me fascinating."

Agnes Jameson's exaltation had not lasted as had Mr. Marsh's. She had expected that her cousin was going to undergo some transformation which would render her worthy of her lover's choice; or rather that those hidden excellences which it seemed to her he must have perceived were going now to manifest themselves. She was disappointed. There was the same selfishness and coldness and insignificance. She had expected to see Royal Marsh happy; she saw him deceived. The rainbows gradually faded around her, and her heart grew heavy. She tried to awaken Lute to a sense of her own unprincipled behaviour, with

what success we see, and now she despaired. She watched him with feverish intentness, to see if he showed signs of dissatisfaction, but was not sure that she saw any.

For Royal Marsh, he felt like a man walking on the brink of a precipice, from which he might not turn away, and which he must not seem to be aware of. This could not be all. There must be more in the girl. He would not believe but that she had some genuine feeling, some thought, some principle. She must be teasing him yet; silly child! not to see that he was tired of such play. Her running off so with Charlie on all occasions must be only mischief; though Charlie's evident passion should teach her more discretion. Somewhere under that lovely exterior must be a woman's soul. If not, then ribbons were as pink as her cheeks and lips, and violets far prettier than her eyes. If not, then he might as well look in the brook for dimples as in her face—as well, and far better. She must love him; or why had she promised to marry him?

As he asked himself the question the refrain of a little song started sharply in his memory.

"Silly elf, 'tis for her pelf

That a' the lads are wooin' at her."

Tut, nonsense! He was ashamed of himself for having such thoughts of dear, sweet Lute. He would go up to see her, and let her smile away his dark fancies.

He found Lute and Charlie Marsh playing backgammon, and Agnes reading. The sight of his cousin made him angry. He had procured him a clerkship, which he was neglecting, and would lose; and though Mr. Marsh was ready to do much to assist his cousin in getting into business, he had no idea of supporting him in idleness. Besides, he was not pleased to find him neglecting his duties in order to flirt with Lute Houghton. As he entered the room, Charlie was just in the act of holding her hand away from some move she was about to make, and she laughed, but seemed in no hurry to withdraw the hand till she saw her lover. Then she blushed, but it did not look like a blush of welcome.

Mr. Marsh bowed his stateliest to the ladies, then turned to his cousin.

"Is the office closed today, Charles?"

"Closed? no!" answered the young man

in a sulky tone, going on with the game. But Lute thought best to leave the board and greet her lover.

He tried to be delighted with the pretty, made smile, and the small hands placed in his; but he was conscious of a little coolness of feeling.

"They certainly give you a great deal of liberty," he continued to his cousin.

"I take it," was the stiff reply. "I am not going to mope there when there is no business going on."

"I thought the business pressing," said Mr. Marsh.

"No such thing. I often sit and fold my hands an hour at a time."

Agnes Jameson interposed in a low, cool tone which was peculiar to her, and which had often struck Mr. Marsh's sense of music and refinement, "I heard General G—— say last night that some of his assistants were always missing when he most wanted them."

"I beg your pardon, Miss Jameson," said the young man, rising, very red in the face. "If I had known that I was intruding, I should not have come to your house." And he strode towards the door without giving her time for any disclaimer, had she desired to make any.

"Why, Agnes! How could you speak so!" cried Lute, as the door banged violently after him.

"I merely repeated a remark," replied Agnes, indolently, and prepared to step out the long window into the garden.

"Don't go away!" pleaded Lute, who dreaded a *tete a tete* with her lover.

"I want some flowers for the vases," she replied, and went on.

It took a long time to get the flowers, and her cousin called her again before she came in. She saw that Lute must have been applying her "kiss and coaxing," for they both seemed in good humor, and Lute flew about like a bird, and at last settled at the piano to enchant her lover with a new song. While he listened he could find no better employment than watching Agnes Jameson arranging her flowers. What a difference there was between her hands and Lute's! Lute's were plumper, more deeply dimpled, and, at a glance, had a firmer whiteness, and exquisite pink was in this slender hand. Instead of Lute's round, pale nails, Agnes had nails filbert-shaped, thin as a film, and rose-pink. A soft pink also flushed the

knuckles, and the blue veins wandered under a skin perfectly transparent and marvellously delicate. It was a dazzling, a sensitive hand, and Mr. Marsh believed that a hand might indicate much. He glanced at those thrumming on the piano keys, opaque, white as chalk, and a little too plump, and he sighed. Then he looked back to the girl bending over her flowers. How was it that he had never noticed her before? Now she stole upon him like a twilight. Softest dusky hair that lay like satin, but was not stiff enough to stand out like Lute's; long, dark lashes curved, and making a shadow on the cheek now they drooped; a face which was full of sensibility, and might at times be beautiful if only some strong feeling shone through it. Now it expressed something like sadness. He had received the impression that Miss Jameson was a quiet, ordinary girl, and never having noticed her particularly, or at all, indeed, had kept that impression. Now he saw clearly that she was a person of strong feelings, and of vivid if not comprehensive intellect, and that her quietness was pride and self-control.

"Now play backgammon with me," said Lute, turning from the piano and going for the board.

Agnes raised her eyes suddenly to his, and a flash seemed to pass between them. Both blushed, then Agnes grew pale, and bent over her flowers again, and after a moment left the room.

Mr. Marsh played somewhat blindly at first, for a tumult of feeling was surging in his heart. He was not sure but he ought to be angry. Agnes Jameson evidently understood his position. She saw that her cousin did not suit him, and that he had gone headlong into a net. Her glance, that fleet glance that had gone through him like an arrow of fire, had certainly been barbed with contempt. Contempt for whom? His brow burned hotly as he thought. Was he not worthy of contempt, a man who at his age and with his experience could be taken with such an empty show?

Then he reproached himself, and tried to wear his chains again. But every link had melted.

All this time he played and rattled his dice according to Hoyle, but with a very dim idea of which side the victory was on.

"Now I must go away, dear," he said, at last.

"Must you, really?" lisped Lute; and as she came to his arms he held her tenderly, and would think her beautiful and lovely.

"Lute," he said, passionately, "do you really love me better than any one else? Tell me truly."

"Why, what a question, when we are engaged!" said Lute.

"No matter. Tell me if you do. I must know. I want something to think of to-night, something pleasant."

"Oh, you're still jealous of Charlie?" she laughed, patting his hands.

"If you love me you will say so," he persisted, without an answering smile. "I tell you I must know. Try to be in earnest once."

"I don't see the need of your being so cross," she pouted, pulling away from him.

He did not coax her, nor speak, but stood looking at her and waiting; then as she went away from him he bade her good-evening, and opened the door to go.

Lute was astonished, and a little alarmed. Of course he was dreadfully jealous of Charlie. Now in some of his desperate fits Charlie had vowed that he would tell his cousin that Lute preferred him to Royal. Suppose that her lover should go to his cousin, and Charlie should fulfil his threat! It would not do. She ran out in the entry, and caught Royal just as he was opening the door.

"Of course I love you," she said, putting her arms over his shoulder.

"Yes, dear!" He kissed her gently on the forehead, and then went away.

Agnes Jameson, gliding stilly and unseen up-stairs, saw that embrace, and the color burned and faded in her face, and her heart rose with a quick throb that hurt her, then sank heavily.

"It is too bad for a man to be so treated," she said to herself, as the tears started from her eyes. "I don't like to see any one so deceived."

CHAPTER III.

"You couldna see her yellow hair,
For gowd and pearls that were sae rare.

"You couldna see her middle sma',
Her gowden girdle was sae braw.

"You couldna see her lillie feet,
Her gowden fringes were sae deep.

"You could not see her fingers sma',
Wi' diamond rings they were covered a'."

Mr. Royal Marsh made up his mind that the sooner he was married the better. He played the impatient lover to the best of his ability, and really succeeded very well for one who was not used to playing parts. But he hated himself for the necessity. In one thing he was sincere. He was tired of wooing, and believed that he would be better satisfied when he could settle back to his business again, and also that Lute would feel called on to exhibit a little dignity when she became the mistress of a house. He bore very patiently with her pretended objections and nonsense. After all, he said to himself, he alone was to blame. She had always acted herself, and if he had made a fool of himself, it was his own fault. He must abide by his choice, and make the best of it.

At length Lute was induced to say that perhaps they would be married in October, if she didn't change her mind before that time. It was now midsummer, and since Mr. Marsh was afraid he didn't rejoice at his prospects as much as he ought, he thought he must put on a show of rejoicing. So he gave a *fete* at his residence in honor of his future bride.

Mr. Marsh's place was admirably calculated for such an entertainment; he had taste and money to show it, consequently the affair was a success. The house, a large, square, stone one, was all a soft, bright glow of wax lights, and colored lights glimmered here and there among the shrubbery and trees, just enough to show a turn in the path, or reveal the tasseled gold of the laburnums, but not enough to destroy the delicious privacy of the gardens. The roses and syringas spoke for themselves, and needed no lamps to indicate their presence. There were no flowers to wilt in the house, but the large hall was a perfect bower of evergreens that breathed a cool forest scent; and over their heads sprang a waterfall that powdered their foliage with fine spray, and fell with silvery plashing into a marble basin rimmed with greenest moss. Snowy draperies of muslin or lace fluttered in all the open windows, and heavy silken flags of all nations hung in place of folding-doors between the rooms. There were dim, secluded nooks here and there, and tables filled with ices, fruits, and wines, and the orchestra sat in a balcony draped over with blossoming honeysuckle. An open pavilion had been built for the danc-

ing; or rather a spring floor had been laid under an enormous graper, and there they danced under the vines that nestled and fluttered and caught reflections from the cornice of little rose-colored lamps, or the bouquets of lamps that hung along the centre.

Altogether Miss Houghton had reason to be satisfied with her *fete*, particularly as it was known to be hers. And it must be confessed that she looked worthy of it.

Never had she been so beautiful. Royal Marsh, looking at her, wondered if, after all, it were of much consequence whether such a form had a soul or not. It seemed like gilding gold. She had done her best tonight, and was, as she intended, irresistible. Sea-green, transparent, silky draperies rustled about and trailed after her, with filmy lace just shading her bosom, and dropping half way from her shoulder to the elbow. A broad band of gold bound her small waist, and finished her drapery at the bottom, and snowy pearls, with here and there a sparkle of diamond, were clustered and banded in her golden hair.

"Why, Lute," said Royal Marsh, taking her hand and gazing on her with pleasure, "you are a mermaid just out of the water, with a wave for a mantle, and the sea-foam in your hair."

Then he turned with a somewhat stately greeting for Agnes Jameson, and for an instant that rare, soft hand seemed melting in his. The touch was quite another thing from the clasp of Lute's small but substantial fingers.

Ever since the Parthian glance that had first attracted the gentleman's attention to Agnes, and which had mortified him so much, there had been a conscious coolness between them. Now she merely bowed, touched his hand, and passed on. In spite of Lute's loveliness, he could not help looking after her. If Lute were a soulless mermaid, Agnes was the spirit of the woods. There was all its coolness and silence in her pure white drapery, and sweet, pale face, from which the hair was all caught back with a careless myrtle-vine. Her very walk seemed to breathe silence as she glided away and disappeared among the clustered *arbor vitæ*.

Several persons noticed something a little odd in Royal Marsh's manner that evening. He was usually pale, but that evening there was a faint flush over his face, and his eyes

sparkled brilliantly, almost unnaturally. Sometimes he would pause in the middle of a sentence as though forgetting what he would say, then put his hand to his forehead, laugh, and go on.

If Mrs. Grundy had not known that such a thing was out of the question in a gentleman of Mr. Marsh's character and habits, she would have thought that he had taken quite champagne enough. But since that could not be, and since no one had seen him taste anything but ice-water, she decided that he must be jealous of Charlie Marsh and that arrogant little flirt Lute Houghton. And no wonder. They had danced together the whole evening, and had scarcely been separated except for the promenade which she took early in the evening on her lover's arm.

This flirting pair certainly made a very handsome couple, and Lute felt herself as much in love with Charlie as it was possible for her to be with any one; and but for the house, which was far too fine to lose, she would have jilted her intended, immediately, and taken his cousin. But this young lady was prudent, and never allowed her impulses to spoil her prospects.

For Charlie, he was mad. That night he felt must determine his fate. The fellow, though indolent and unprincipled, had strong passions, and with his whole strength he adored Lute Houghton. He was ready to die for her, or to go through fire to get her.

After dancing till even Lute was tired, he led her down the shady walk, pouring out his love in incoherent sentences, begging, reproaching, and threatening in a breath.

"If you knew what I know, Lute," he said, seating himself beside her in the arbor, "you would give up my cousin tonight."

"What do you know?" she inquired, full of curiosity.

He hesitated an instant; and then recollecting that all stratagems are fair in love and war, he went on as confidently as though he were telling the truth.

"Promise me that you will not tell any one."

"I will not, certainly," she promised, greatly interested, forgetting to withdraw the hands he clasped.

"Well, my cousin Royal has lost all his property in a cotton speculation, and he

hasn't a cent now but his old business. I have as much as he has, Lute. This house will have to go."

Lute uttered a cry.

"Why didn't he tell me? He has deceived me. I never will have him, and I will go and tell him so this moment!"

"Stop, Lute," he urged, holding her back. "It wouldn't do to go to him before company. Nobody but me knows about it, and it would be worse if it were talked about. Besides, it would not look well to turn a man off because he has lost his money. People will talk about it. I don't blame you for looking out for yourself, but it doesn't sound well. I'll tell you what to do. Tell him that you don't love him, and don't want to marry him; but don't let him know that you have heard anything about this."

"Can this be true?" murmured the girl, appalled at the sudden fall of all her golden dreams.

"Of course it is true. Don't you see how odd he appears tonight? how excited he looks?"

"I'm sorry I ever was engaged to him," she cried, bursting into tears.

Charlie put his arm around her, and soothed and kissed her, not seeing at first the figure that stood in the arbor door.

Mr. Marsh had come in search of Lute, and had heard her last exclamation.

"Allow me to interrupt you a moment," he said, in a low tone.

Charlie started, but kept his ground, and Lute looked defiantly at him.

"Lute, do you like Charles better than you do me?" he asked in a trembling voice, and with an air of excitement that did not seem all pain.

"Yes, I do," she answered, admonished by a hard pressure from Charlie's hand.

"You wish to break your engagement with me, and enter into one with him?" he went on.

"Yes," she said again.

"Well, you are free, and I wish you both all happiness. If I can do anything for you I shall be very glad to." And bowing he withdrew, and left the lovers to themselves.

"Do you suppose he'll go and kill himself?" asked Lute, in a tremor.

The path seemed to rise and fall before Royal Marsh as he walked up toward the house, and at first he didn't see Agnes Jameson, who shrank back into the shadow

as he approached her; then he stopped suddenly.

"Agnes, Lute is going to marry my cousin Charles."

"Mr. Marsh!" she exclaimed.

He seated himself.

"Yes, I have just seen them, and it is all settled. They will be a handsome couple, and well suited to each other. I ought not to have thought of her. It has only been an annoyance to the child, this engagement."

"Lute has behaved badly!" cried Agnes, passionately. "I shall not forgive her."

"Don't say that," he said, gently and smiling.

She looked at him, her eyes flashing through tears, and then he saw that Agnes Jameson was beautiful.

"How can I help saying it?" she said. "She has been heartless and unprincipled from the first. I am ashamed of her. I dislike her. My father shall send her away."

"But, Agnes," he urged, softly, "if we are both better suited so—if I have learned that I was myself hasty in asking her hand, and was only fascinated, but not in love, what then? Doubtless the *eclat* of a broken engagement is not pleasant, and friends have a right to complain. I would never have broken it, but she has. Will you forgive me for saying I am relieved? We both made a foolish mistake, and mine was the less pardonable, because I was older, and should have known better. I hope there's no harm done."

"Certainly not, in that case," said Agnes, abruptly, and turned to go into the house.

He arose to follow her, but staggered in doing so.

"You are ill," she said, facing him.

"Not ill—but I feel very strangely," he said, putting his hand to his head. "My head aches and swims. I have been afraid some one might notice it. Please don't say that I am ill."

They walked on in silence, and as they reached the open window he stopped her.

"You are not displeased with me about this affair?" he asked, earnestly, taking her hand.

"On the contrary, I congratulate you," she said, hastily.

For a second time his lips touched her hand, then she snatched it away, and went in, leaving him there.

CHAPTER IV.

"She neither chattered with her teeth,
Nor shivered with her chin.

'Alas, alas!' her father cried,
'There is nae breath within.'

"He rent the sheet upon her face,
A little abune her chin;
And as soon as Lord William looked thereon
Her color to come did 'gin."

The next day after the *fete* it was told that Mr. Marsh had a violent fever, and the doctors were shaking their heads over him. It was a fever that had begun to rage in the neighborhood, and the servants fled from fear of the contagion. Agnes heard the news with a paling lip, remembering how he had appeared the night before.

"If you had any feeling you would go and inquire for him, Lute," she said.

"And catch the fever?" cried Lute, who did not know how well her cousin knew her affairs. "I shall do no such thing. Charles will call and tell us; but I'm almost afraid to see him."

"I shall stop at the door and inquire when we ride out in the morning," said Agnes.

"Then I won't ride," vowed Lute. "And if you are going there, I won't stay in the house with you. I'll go over to Nelly Bly's."

"Do, by all means," said Agnes, dryly.

"Any one would think you were in love with him," Lute flung out.

"Never dare to speak so to me again!" exclaimed Agnes, flushing crimson, and looking with blazing eyes at her cousin.

Lute, astonished, shrank away.

The news from the sick man became worse. There were so many cases of the fever about that it was impossible to obtain proper assistance. But one nurse could be got, who took charge in the daytime from six to six; and the housekeeper had to bear the burden of the night, the servants and Charlie Marsh sharing Lute's fear of contagion.

The sick man grew worse and worse, and at last it was reported that the doctors had given him up. That evening, as the housekeeper was preparing the drinks for the night, the nurse having generously consented to stay in the sick-room an hour past her time, a slight form, wrapped in a hooded mantle, stole into the pantry, and a pale face looked into hers.

"Good gracious! Miss"—

"Hush!" whispered the girl, speaking with lips as white as her cheeks. "How is he?"

"He's very badly, miss. There isn't much hope." And the woman wiped her eyes.

"Does he know any one?"

"No; he is delirious all the time."

That night the housekeeper laid down on a sofa in a room next the invalid's, and slept the sleep of the weary, never waking till a soft touch and a softer voice called her at early day. And that night the cooling draught was at the sick man's lips before he had a chance to call for it, and the ice was constantly renewed on his burning brow; and while he slept a pale watcher knelt at his bedside, and softly fanned him, praying and weeping silently. And still the next night and the next, and for five nights, the same devoted heart beat near him, and seemed slowly breaking also. The fifth night was the crisis of his fever, and after a long sleep, which seemed like the sleep of death, Royal Marsh opened his eyes and saw a woman kneeling beside his bed in the dim light, with her face bowed down, and it seemed to him that a passionate prayer was whispered by the covered lips.

"Who is it?" he asked, feebly.

A shiver ran through the form; then she rose, and bending over him to offer his draught, and in such a position that he could not see her face, answered in a whisper, "Your nurse. Please take this, and don't talk."

He swallowed the draught, drew a long sigh, half of weakness and half of content, and sank back to sleep again.

The next morning Mr. Marsh was pronounced out of danger, and in a fair way to get right up, "thanks to the housekeeper's good care," the doctor said, rubbing his hands with delight; and Mr. Marsh himself held out his thin hand with a word of gratitude and a smile.

Mrs. White smiled, but said nothing. No one but herself knew of that pale girl who had stolen in night after night after the house was still, and crept away before any one was stirring.

In a few days Mr. Jameson came home from a journey, and found his daughter ill of a fever. The father was almost wild. He sent for doctors and nurses right and left; he insisted that there was nothing done for her; he hurt her with his cares.

Neither doctors nor nurses availed.

Royal Marsh had an excellent constitution, and in ten days he was able to ride out, and came back with a ravenous appetite.

"Give me something to eat instantly, Mrs. White!" was his laughing command as he entered the dining-room.

Mrs. White smiled faintly, and busied herself, but there were traces of tears about her eyes, and she spoke falteringly.

"What is the matter? What has happened?" he asked, at length.

"O sir, Miss Jameson"—And the tears fairly broke forth.

"Is she ill?" he asked quickly, changing color.

"Yes, sir, and the doctors say there's no chance. I was there today, and to hear her cry out for ice and water and scream with pain is dreadful. She doesn't know anybody."

"My God!" he cried, starting up. "Why wasn't I told of this? Can there be nothing done?"

"The doctor told me not to tell you of any sickness or anything disagreeable," said the housekeeper. "And I hoped that she would get better."

Royal Marsh sank into a chair, and dropped his face into his hands. He sat so for so long a time that at length the housekeeper ventured to say,

"There may be a little hope yet."

He started up.

"Go there and take care of her as you did of me," he said, hurriedly. "You know better than any one else what to do. Come over twice every day to tell me how she is, and if there is anything in the world I can do, no matter what, tell me, and it shall be done. Go now; don't wait. And, Mrs. White, in the name of God, don't let her die!"

The woman seemed about to speak, but hesitated, then went out silently. She did not know that her master's engagement with Lute Houghton was broken, and she felt that should she ever betray Agnes Jameson's secret, now was not the time for it.

Everything that love and money could do for Agnes was done, and in vain. She was wild with fever, so wild that though Royal Marsh went to the house every day, and even went to the door of her chamber once, he turned away again. He could not see

her so. He would keep that last image of her—smiling, white-robed, and myrtle-crowned—in his heart.

Then there came the fatal day, and when she came to tell him how Agnes had passed the night, Mrs. White told the whole tale. Then he knew who had bent over him unwearied night after night, whose sobbing prayer for him had been the first sound that had entered his conscious ear. In nursing him Agnes Jameson had caught the fever of which she was dying.

"I wouldn't tell you as long as there was a chance that that angel would ever tell you herself," sobbed Mrs. White. "But she will never tell you."

Royal Marsh could scarcely hear for his passionate sobs of tenderness and grief. If he could once have known her, only for an instant, and thanked her for such love, and told her how utterly he loved her, he could have better borne to lose her.

He went to Mr. Jameson's and staid all day, but was not allowed in the chamber. He could not be calm enough, and Agnes would not have known him. He kept persisting that she should not and could not die, and that he could save her. Only let him see her! Mr. Jameson himself calmed his own sorrow, and tried to soothe his friend's despair.

About sunset Mrs. White stood speechless in the door of the room where the two men were.

"Well?" said the father, starting up.

"It is all over, sir! She went before we knew."

"Let me stay alone with her tonight, Mr. Jameson," was the other's request. "She would have been my wife had she lived."

Mr. Jameson grasped his hand in silence, and led him to her room.

At last they were alone! He saw her for the first time since his *fete*, and now she was again dressed in white. Flowers were flung over her robe and hands, and lay close to her sweet, pale face. Ah! that face had watched over him when he knew it not. The head was a little turned, and seemed to welcome him as he entered the room.

Once alone with her his passion broke forth. He lifted her in his arms, and rained tears and kisses on her cheek. She could not be dead! He pillowed the dear cheek on his bosom, and begged her to speak one word, to wake, or he should also die.

"O Agnes! all my fancied love for an-

other was only a waking up to love you! Do not leave me, my love! my love!"

A faint tremor ran through the form in his arms, and with a faint sigh Agnes Jameson opened her eyes and looked at him.

In an instant he was calm. Still holding her in his arms, he rang the bell for assistance, then softly rubbed her hands and bathed her face. That sudden, apparent death had been only a swoon, or love had indeed performed a miracle.

Agnes Jameson asked no questions when day after day Royal Marsh came to her bedside bringing flowers, and sitting there as long as he would be allowed. She did not shrink when he held her hand, or kissed her cheek at parting, with a word of fond farewell. She saw that every one, even her father, recognized his right to be there, and consulted him on all occasions. She was enjoying that most delightful of all states, a happy convalescence, and was quite content to leave to those about her the care of the proprieties, the delicacies, pride, dignity, and all those feminine tortures. And then when she was able to ride out, leaning back in his soft carriage, it was quite too late to assume any airs. When he said, "My darling, you have quite a color," she was in no frame of mind or body to draw herself up with a "How dare you, sir?"

This unique courtship and betrothing had been made between a delirious man and an apparently dead woman, but it did not appear that it could have been better done under the most ordinary and stupid circumstances; at least no one proposed to make any change.

I am afraid that Lute Houghton isn't as happy as she might be. She was dreadfully angry with Charlie Marsh, but for her own sake could not expose him. She refused to have him, and got up some little scenes,

but Mr. Marsh and Agnes were too much engrossed in each other to pay much attention to her. So she suffered herself to be reconciled at last, but settled into a chronic conviction that she had been the victim of a plot—that Agnes had injured her with Mr. Marsh, and that Charlie's treachery had been instigated by her cousin.

"So Mr. Marsh has got a Sappho after all," said Nelly Bly, "and Lute has subsided from a mansion-house to a clerkship."

"Oh, fie, Nelly! You're always thinking of the house," said Agnes.

"May I be your bridemaid, Aggie, if I try not to outshine you?"

Agnes didn't hear her. She was looking down the street up which a gentleman was slowly walking toward the house.

And this reminds me that I have never described my hero—a shocking omission. It is too late now, but the reader may be sure that Agnes found no fault with his looks, and yet she was not easily suited. She considered him by far the handsomest man of her acquaintance.

How gracefully he raised his hat when he saw her! and how much better than all beauty was the brightening of his eye that met hers, and the fond smile that greeted her!

They were married in great style that winter, Lute, Nelly Bly, and a host of butterflies standing as bridesmaids; and the mansion-house has a fair and stately mistress, who is happy in the adoration of her husband.

Mr. Marsh firmly believes that his life was saved by Agnes's nursing, and Agnes is quite as well convinced that her recovery was a resurrection wrought by the power of love. We will find no fault with either belief, since they make each more sacred to the other.

RUN AWAY WITH.

BY W. H. MACY.

It had been an unlucky day with us, — such a day, or rather such a day's work, as always makes all hands blue, and puts everybody in an uncomfortable humor. We had been chasing whales all the afternoon, and had struck two; but the mate's whale had escaped, by his iron drawing out; and the second mate's had run him far to windward, and we had seen the boat with her sail set before it was quite dark, showing that she was returning to the ship without having secured her prize. The signal-lantern hung at the spanker-gaff, as we lay to awaiting the arrival of this last boat.

"Hard luck! hard-luck!" grumbled Captain Swift, as he paced nervously fore and aft the quarter-deck. "We sha'n't fill the 'Speedwell' with oil in a hurry, unless we do better work than this. A hund'ed barrels struck and lost is enough for *one* day, I reckon. Discouraging!"

The approaching sound of oars was heard, and soon the waist-boat loomed out of the darkness alongside.

"Stand by to hoist the boat!"

The order was obeyed, willingly at least, if not cheerfully, for supper was waiting, and the boat's crew, tired, drenched with water, and disheartened, were glad enough to find themselves at home again. The captain paused in his walk, and asked, impatiently, —

"Well, what's the matter, Mr. Bennett?"

"I hung on as long as I thought prudent, sir, but I never got up abreast of him to get a good lance; and finally I was obliged to cut my line and let him go, as it was getting dark."

"Run away with, eh, Mr. Bennett?" Captain Swift asked, in a sneering tone that nettled the young officer not a little.

"Well — yes, sir, I suppose that's what we shall have to call it finally. But from the time the iron went into the whale until I cut my line he never slack'd his racing speed enough to show any play at all. I've no fault to find with my bowman, or the rest of my boat's crew, for they all did their best to haul me on; but I never got forward of his flukes long enough to get a dart at him."

"Run away with," repeated the captain, in much the same tone as before. "That's a pretty good story to tell of a young man who has a reputation to make. Were you ever run away with by a whale, Mr. Crowell?" he asked, addressing the first officer.

"No, sir: I never *was*," returned the mate; "but still I don't know how soon I may be. I don't like to brag, — at least until I have retired from the business."

"Well, I've been whaling more years than either of you," said Captain Swift, "and I never had that story to tell. And I'd just like to see the whale — sperm whale or right whale — that would run away with *me*, after I'd had three hours of daylight to work upon him. However, it's no use crying over spilt milk. Come, supper, Mr. Crowell."

The young second mate leaned against the rail, with his arms folded, but did not trust himself to speak. It was evident that the sneering and bragging words of his superior had cut deeply.

"Don't mind it, Mr. Bennett," said the chief mate, lingering after the captain had gone below. "Some allowance must be made, I suppose, for the old man's being disappointed today at having so good a show for whales and getting nothing."

"Disappointed!" repeated the other. "Well, are n't we all disappointed — you and I and the rest of us? I have done my duty up to the handle in this ship; and, without boasting, I honestly think that I can muckle any whale that *he* can; but I'll defy him to do impossibilities. And I say it was an unkind speech."

"I think so too," assented Mr. Crowell; "and his last brag was no credit to him at all. He may hook to a whale yet that will race him clean out of his reckoning; and I only hope that it may happen on this voyage. But come, forget about it, and let's get some supper."

The supper was swallowed almost in silence, for there was a feeling of constraint upon each one of his officers. Mr. Bennett felt hurt and angry at what he considered an unjust insinuation; the mate felt embarrassed, and would say nothing to stir up the

troubled waters; and the captain, although he began to regret his hasty words, would say nothing to acknowledge that he had been in the wrong. The captain seldom will do this: he, like the king, can do no wrong, and rests secure in the armor of authority.

So the subject appeared to be dropped, but it was not difficult to see that the cutting words still rankled in the breast of the younger whaler. Captain Swift was in truth a man of experience and skill in his profession, and had justly enough borne the reputation of a "high-killer" among his brother whaler, as also among ship owners as a smart and lucky man. It might have been true enough that he had never met with such an adventure as this which had befallen Mr. Bennett, but it's a long lane that has no turning. It would have been more sensible on his part, instead of bragging in advance, to have resolved, like Mr. Crowell, not to shout until he was out of the woods.

But a few days had elapsed when more whales were seen, and the captain himself got fast to a specimen which at once proved itself a lively one. He had been fast at least two hours, and had as yet given his whale no wound likely to decide the victory; but, luckily for the captain, his whale, though running all the time at a rapid rate, did not, like the second mate's, hold a steady direction to windward, but several times changed his course, so as to cut across the track of the other boats, which had been all the time doing their best to take a hand in the game. But at last, the young second mate, adopting a new line of tactics, and changing places with his boat-steerer, got up his longest lance, and stood prepared for a flying dart. As the whale, still at full speed, changed his course so as to head up across the bows of the waist-boat, the order was given to "pull ahead!"

The monster went driving by in his mad career, several fathoms distant, — too far for any chance of fastening with the harpoons; but the nervous arm of the young second mate sent the long lance flying with fatal aim into the whale's side. The next spout thrown from his spiracle was brightly tinged with his life-blood, and the victory was quickly won. At the dinner-table, after the prize was in the fluke-chain alongside, Captain Swift was in high spirits at our success, but seemed inclined to say lit-

tle or nothing about the strategy of Mr. Bennett, who, modestly enough, said nothing. But the mate could not resist the opportunity of nettling his superior by asking, —

"How long do you think you were fast to the whale, sir?"

"I don't know," returned Captain Swift, carelessly. "An hour or two, I suppose."

"Pretty smart fish," said Mr. Crowell, returning to the attack.

"Pretty lively, — yes," in the same indifferent tone as before.

"It was lucky he milled round in circles. If he had struck a bee-line at the same rate of going, it looks to me very much as if you might have been *run away with*."

"Oh, no! I'd risk that. That's something that never happened to Joe Swift yet. Oh, I would have muddled him out pretty soon, anyhow. That was a good lance though, Mr. Bennett, I *will* say it, — a *very* good lance; but the whale was getting tired, and I think had already begun to slack up his speed some. I should have muddled him pretty soon, you may depend; but it's just as well as it is."

The two mates exchanged queer glances as they rose from the table, but it was a case which it was not worth while to argue, especially with their superior officer. The captain alone has the right, in the case of any disputed point, to be positive and dogmatical.

"That in the captain's but a choleric word
Which in the soldier is rank blasphemy."

Our cruise in tropical latitudes drew to a close, for it was time to bear away for our spring port, whence we started for the great right-whaling-ground "on the nor'west." Captain Swift's experience on his previous voyage had been mostly confined to sperm-whaling; but he still felt himself more than a match for any beast of the order *cetacea*, and boasted that he had never yet cut from any whale while his boat was in a condition to float. He might get his boat stoven, he said, — we were all liable to that, and there was credit in it sometimes, — but as for cutting line, and giving up, beaten by a whale, not he!

We found right whales plenty on the Kodiak ground; and were soon stowing down oil at a rate that promised a very successful season's work. The mates, both young men, had served their apprenticeship at

northern whaling, and were far more at home at this kind of work than their superiors.

One morning, when the wind was light, and the weather foggy and clear by spells, the boats were lowered away, there being many right whales in sight in different directions. The captain gave his orders to Mr. Crowell not to chase to a great distance from the ship, as he was afraid a thick fog might shut down.

"Now lower away, you and Mr. Bennett, and try them carefully, and I guess I'll wait a while and take the ship's chance."

So the larboard and waist boats pushed off, keeping at first well together; but after a while they diverged, in pursuit of different whales, which, however, seemed too shy to allow of getting near enough to strike. The captain, from his promenade on the top of the hurricane-house, had been watching this dodge game for a couple of hours, when a large whale came up quite near the ship, and blew off his spouts in the most tantalizing manner, like so many challenges to mortal combat.

"Stand by to lower away my boat!" cried the captain, in high excitement. "Here, steward!" said he to me. "I want you at my midship oar. Harris has got a lame arm, and is n't fit to go today."

To hear was to obey, so I at once left my stewardship to take care of itself, and became, at a moment's notice, midship oarsman of the starboard's boat.

We lowered away, and a few dips of the paddles brought us within darting distance of the monster, who was apparently quite unconscious of danger.

The tall Portuguese boat-steerer rose to his feet, and poised his harpoon; at the same instant the captain gave a violent heave at the steering oar, throwing the boat's head toward the whale.

"Give it to him, Antoine! In, paddles, and stand by the oars!"

I saw the first iron speed on its mission, but the next instant I saw nothing, for we were all drenched and blinded with the shower of salt spray, as the tortured monster gave a thundering spank with his fluke, knocking to pieces a wave of the sea, as it would have knocked the boat had she been but a foot or two nearer. When I got my eyes open again, gasping for breath from the effects of this cold shower bath, I saw the line spinning out through the chocks,

the captain hastily throwing on a round turn at the loggerhead.

A ringing blast from the whale's spout holes, not unlike a sounding blow upon a brass kettle, as he pointed his head to windward, and the next instant our boat was following at a frightful rate of speed, directly in the wind's eye.

The captain exchanged places with Antoine, and got his lance out ready for the attack, but he was not likely soon to have a chance for using it. Away he sped to windward, our boat's stem cutting each successive wave, and dashing the spray into our faces; while amidships the sea appeared to boil upward on either side, as if coming in over the gunwales to engulf us.

Those ponderous flukes were ever in motion ahead of us, knocking the sea right and left, and the periodical blasts of respiration, like snorts of defiance, were wafted down to our ears; but the tension on the line was ever the same, and our speed at a uniform rate. We saw in the distance the other two boats, evidently doing their best to overtake and re-enforce us; but boats, ship, and all were rapidly left behind.

In vain we exerted our strength upon the line, trying to haul the boat up abreast of the whale; in vain the captain exhorted, coaxed, stormed, and swore by turns. There was our fiery steed just as far ahead of us, and here were we dead in his wake, and likely to remain there. As long as our irons and line held, he might tow us in the same relative positions, until his strength should be exhausted, for to give him a death-wound was impossible. On, on!

"We must haul up to him!" said Captain Swift: "near enough, at any rate, to spade his fluke. We can get no chance to use a lance upon him. It may as well be put away. Lend me a hand with that boat-spade, Bailey," to his bowman. "I'll try the virtue of that, if we can only get near enough. Hold on hard, Antoine! and stand by, all of you, to haul and gather in a little line whenever you can."

Our efforts were at times rewarded with partial success; and when we had, by hard struggles, got near enough for a dart of the spade, it was answered by a spiteful blow of the monster's tail, which compelled us, for immediate safety, to slack out line; while the whale, so far from seeming to be crippled by the spade wound in his "small," started off again at the old rate of speed,

and we lost all the ground which we had gained.

It was necessary to begin the work all over again, and each time we were getting more tired and exhausted; for our arms were strained nearly out of their sockets, and we were so drenched with the cold spray, after two hours of this kind of work, that we looked like so many parboiled men; while our teeth fairly rattled in our heads. Still on, on!

The "Speedwell" 's topsails only were to be seen above the horizon to leeward, while we had lost the run of the other boats long before. But the captain, completely upon his mettle, was determined not to be conquered by a whale, and encouraged us to renewed exertions. When again we had, inch by inch, hauled the boat into position near the crotch of the flukes, and the spade was seized for another dart, down went the whale, seeming now to have adopted a new dodge. Slack out line we must, for "needs must when the Devil drives," but our whale did not descend deeply. He continued to run under water nearly as fast as before, coming to the surface now and then to blow, but always doing so at a safe distance, and keeping his course straight to windward without deviation. On, on!

The ship has set her topgallant-sails, and we can see them, like little boats' sails, just above the sea-level; but they will not be much longer in sight, unless there is some change in the situation.

It is one of great risk now, and we all realize it; for if we should get our boat stove, at so great a distance from human aid, we must all perish. Nobody says this, but we all think it. Panting and shivering, we have given up our efforts at hauling the line: it is only exhausting our little strength to no purpose. There is a ship in sight ahead, steering off toward us, and we all think that if any accident befalls us we must look in that direction for aid and safety, rather than to our own comrades left so far behind.

"O dear! if he would only mill off to leeward, so as to carry us back again!" says Captain Swift. "We are getting so far on our course that, if we kill the whale, they can never get the ship up to us tonight."

Just so: but our tug had n't the remotest idea of going to leeward. He knew his strongest game, and was determined to play it out. Still on, on!

Antoine nips his line at the loggerhead, and holds on harder than ever, hoping to part it. We all hope the same thing, the captain not less than the rest of us, for that would be an honorable retreat from the difficulty, — a something unavoidable, liable to happen even to the best of whalers. But to cut the line! — how can he make up his mind to do it? The strange ship is nearing us: we can see a little of her hull now, but it is not likely that those on board can see us yet. Hold on hard, Antoine, and box her down!

For once the hemp of our tow-line is anathematized for being too good in quality: if it were only a little rotten, we might part it. Something must be done soon. That trumpet blast of defiance is as clear and strong as ever; the mast-heads of the "Speedwell" are barely visible to the eye, and still we go on! on!

What's that? A fog-bank! Coming down upon us, too, for already the strange ship is indistinct in the mist; another moment, and she is hidden entirely from view. The coming of the fog is very sudden, for five minutes ago no one had thought of such a thing. But it is enough to decide the captain's course of action. It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back of his pride. He now has a fair excuse for doing what he has so boasted of never having done in his life. He says nothing, but stoops over the clumsy cleft at the bow of the boat. Just then she dives into a chopping sea, the spray again flies into our faces, and we tumble backward over the thwarts, with the slack of the line in our hands. The tension has slackened so suddenly that we had no warning of what was coming.

"Parted, sir?" asked the boat-steerer, knowing the truth well enough, but feeling it necessary to pretend otherwise.

"All right," answered the captain, quietly. "It's just as well. Take your oars."

He seemed undecided now whether to keep on pulling to windward, or to set the sail, and turn back in the direction of our own ship: for the fog now encircled us completely, though it was not so dense as we had feared it would be. Our circle of vision had a radius of perhaps half a mile.

The captain pulled out his fog-horn, and blew long, loud blasts upon it, which were very soon answered from the strange ship to windward of us. This decided the doubt and we pulled up in that direction.

Guided by the sound of her bell and fog-horn, we were able to steer directly for the approaching stranger, and were soon alongside of the "Scotland," one of our old consorts; for we had previously spoken her several times during the season.

"What are you doing here, Swift?" Captain Edwards asked, as soon as he recognized his old acquaintance.

"Got fast to a whale, and he run me a good spell to windward. Parted from him just about the time the fog shut down."

"Did, eh?" returned the other, with a quick glance at the end of the line lying on the top of the coil. "Guess your line must have been *nicked* in darting your spades, which of course weakened it," he added, with a grin. "That's your ship down to leeward, I suppose?"

"Yes: but they may not have seen you, and I know they must have lost the run of me. Better fire a few guns, and they will understand it, and heave to for us."

We enjoyed the hospitality of Captain Edwards for a few hours; but, as the fog

partly cleared, we found the "Speedwell" the same night, though it was not until ten o'clock that we pulled ignominiously alongside.

"Where's your whale, sir?" inquired Mr. Crowell.

"God knows," was the answer, "where he is now. He was bound to windward, spouting clear, the last I saw of him."

"What! did you part your line, sir?" inquired the second mate.

The captain hesitated a moment, and was going to lie about it, but his better nature conquered.

"Well, the truth is, Mr. Bennett, I did part my line, — with a sharp boat-knife and a clear conscience. It's true I did n't cut until the fog came on, but I should have had to very soon, anyhow; for I had almost lost sight of the ship, and was no nearer to killing my whale than I was at the first outset. I know what you are thinking of, Mr. Bennett, *but I take it all back*, with shame to myself for having said it. And I own up to having been *run away with*."

RUNNING A-MUCK.

BY W. H. MACY.

When I was up in the Arctic, in the "Plowboy" (whaler), in the disastrous season of 1851, we took on board as supernumeraries several men from the barque "Carnatic," which had been wrecked in the ice-fields. When a ship was lost, the crew were divided round on board other ships, and did duty, working their passage, as it might be, to the Sandwich Islands; and so many whalers were cast away during that season, that almost every ship had more or less of these castaways.

Among those which fell to our share were two Chinese, who had joined the "Carnatic" at Hong Kong, and, strange to say, a full-blooded Malay also. For it is not often that these Malays get on board American ships. This man — "Othello," as he was called — was the first of his race with whom I had ever been associated as a shipmate, and I devoutly hope he may be the last I shall ever meet.

He was not a bad seaman in the main: he was, like the Lascars, good at some kinds of ship duty, and good for nothing at others. He held the two Chinamen in mortal contempt, and omitted no opportunity of showing his aversion. He might well have parodied the words of his great Moorish namesake, "Rude am I in my speech," for he talked very few words of English, though it was evident that he understood it much better than he pretended to be able to. More than once, when some of us were making remarks about him which we thought entirely incomprehensible, his sudden start and vindictive look indicated that he was not half as thick-skulled as we had supposed.

The season was up, and the "Plowboy," with her hold nearly filled with oil, was making good way toward Honolulu, having already reached the mild climate of lower latitudes, and entered the limit of the north-east trades. I was counted in the same watch with Othello; and on the particular night in question Jack Slade and I were talking about the curious phenomenon of "running a-muck," as practiced in some Eastern countries, — for Jack had been reading about some case of the sort in his first watch below.

"I can't see how a man can hold his life

so cheap," said Jack; "for he must finally be overpowered. It is not to gratify any thirst for revenge, for, as I understand it, the muck-runner does not single out any particular victims, but attacks any one that comes in his way. Religious fanaticism, some travellers say it is, but that is a strange kind of religion."

"I don't believe half the yarns that are written about it," said I. "A man may be insane, and his insanity may take that violent form. Such cases are liable to occur in civilized lands as well as elsewhere."

"You don't believe it, eh?" put in old Tom Conway. "Well, I tell you you have never sailed on East-India voyages as I have, or you wouldn't be so ready to disbelieve all that is strange. Why, here's this black-guard of a Malay!" continued Tom, lowering his voice a little. "I've been uneasy ever since that fellow came aboard, and I sha'n't get a sound night's sleep till we are well rid of him."

Jack and I both laughed loudly at Tom's strong expressions. He was much in the habit of exaggerating, but in this case he appeared to be really in earnest, and his manner became more impressive than before.

"It does n't become you to laugh at this," he went on. "Why, if I'd been the 'old man,' with my knowledge and experience, I wouldn't have taken that chap aboard here on any account; or at least, if I did, I'd ha' put him in double irons, under guard, until I got him into port. To be sure, there is n't so much danger from 'em when they can't get opium; but if this black thief could get a smell at the ship's medicine-chest, he would soon nose out that drug. And if he got just the right dose, there's a fearful chance of his running a-muck right here among us. Anyhow, a Malay is n't to be trusted, opium or no opium; and I would about as soon have a powder-magazine about decks as this fellow."

Othello's tawny face at this moment appeared round the corner of the try-works, where he must have heard the whole colloquy; but whether he had understood it or not was a question no one could solve. I have always thought he had, or at least the purport of it, if not all the words. He stared

at us all, but said nothing. He kept mostly apart from the rest during his watches on deck, often soliloquizing in his native jargon, for which nobody was any the wiser.

When I went aft at four bells to relieve the helm, I saw the Malay sneaking along the lee-side of the quarter-deck in the darkness, as if he had come from the cabin. The Portuguese whom I relieved, and to whom I mentioned the circumstance, had seen nothing of him; nor had Mr. Evans, the third mate, who was walking on the weather-side at the time. The thought of the medicine-chest, in connection with the croaking words of old Tom, flashed for a moment across my mind; but I dismissed it at once, laughing at what I considered his foolish fears.

When the watch was relieved, I went below, and, being very sleepy, and the hanging-lamp giving hardly light enough to make darkness visible, I turned in at once. I took no notice about the Malay, or any one else, and in five minutes was snoring lustily.

A general stir in the fore-castle and exclamations of alarm roused me to consciousness, and, with the instinct of a sailor, I jumped to my feet, hat and jacket in hand. Several others were up, struggling into their clothes, and some one was trying to light the lamp.

"I told you so!" said Tom Conway, in great excitement. "That infernal savage is running a-muck. He has killed To-Pang, the Chinese, and will kill all hands if he is n't soon knocked over himself."

Tom seized the mincing-knife, which was kept in cleets over his bunk, and, removing the sheath so as to expose its thin, keen blade, took it by one of the handles, and started up the ladder. I was close behind Tom, and all the rest followed. No one wanted to be caught in a *cul de sac*, if it came to a death-struggle: it was better to be above-board, with plenty of room.

The tableau that met my view as my head rose above the level of the spar-deck was fearful enough to account for all this excitement. The central figure in it was Othello himself, standing on the top of the caboose-cover on the try-works, brandishing that most fearful of all the keen, cutting implements peculiar to the whaling business—a "boarding-knife." His brawny form was naked to the waist; his black hair streaming loose to his shoulders; and his

person from head to foot, as well as his duck trousers, splashed all over with blood. The moon had risen since we went below, and her bright beams fell directly upon this horrible figure, bringing it out in the boldest relief. The body of poor To-Pang lay near the end of the windlass, in a pool of blood, with the head cut nearly off from the trunk, and the ghastly face upturned to the moon. The men of the watch on deck, after giving the alarm to us below, had scattered in various directions, to escape the first rush of the mad Malay, and to get weapons of defence.

The captain had just reached the deck, and was hastily loading the only available musket,—for the ship was quite guiltless of other firearms, save a single pistol belonging to the chief mate, and two old "King's-arms," with flint locks, which might have done good service at Bunker Hill, or the Cow-pens, but of which the butt was now by far the most effective end. The officers were all on the quarter-deck, arming themselves with lances or cutting-spades. Some of the men had climbed into the boats for weapons, and two or three were mounted up in the rigging, looking down upon the frightful panorama and quaking with fear.

I had caught up a hand-spike as soon as I reached the deck, this being the only fighting implement at hand. But we had little time for preparation. The Malay, who had been rolling his eyes as if in a delirious ecstasy, gave a yell that froze the blood in our veins, as he sprang from his elevated platform, right down toward us. Old Tom, taken by surprise, fell back so suddenly that he lost hold of the mincing-knife, which went ringing away to leeward; the awkward blow of my hand-spike just grazed Othello's back as he dashed by me; several of my watch-mates tumbled headlong back down the fore-scuttle to save their lives; but the gleaming boarding-knife found its victim in Manuel, the poor little Portuguese, who fell with his arm laid open clear to the bone. With a back-handed slash of his terrible weapon, Othello gave the death-stroke to our pet dog Sailor, who was barking at his heels; and, wheeling short round, sprang back to his former perch on the caboose-cover. A shot from the captain's gun passed clear of his head; and several blows from hand-spikes and other wooden missiles thrown at him only seemed to infuriate him, for he cared nothing for the bruises

inflicted. Nothing short of killing him could be a safe policy for us; and it was awkward darting weapons in the night, as we might be as likely to hit our friends as the common enemy. With his advantage of position, and his surprising agility, he thus far held us all at bay.

Another yell rent the heavens, even more piercing than the former one; the bright, two-edged knife, reeking with blood, flashed aloft in the moonbeams, and the Malay, with a single bound from the try-works to the main-hatches, rushed aft to the quarter-deck. The second shot from the musket pierced his left arm instead of his head, as intended; and we could no longer look to firearms for our safety. The captain and mate jumped or rather fell down the companionway, as that terrible knife gleamed above their heads. Our party rushed aft, however, headed by Tom Conway, to attack Othello in the rear. But, quick as a tiger, he turned, and stood at bay, erect and defiant as ever, though smarting from the pain of the musket-ball. Tom hurled the mincing-knife edgewise full at his face; out he dodged just low enough to escape a fatal wound, the knife just slicing off the top of his scalp. A lunge from my cutting-spade was cleverly evaded by a quick, cat-like movement on his part; and again that unearthly yell rose, seeming to split the drums of our ears. With it came the cry from the strong lungs of the second mate in the starboard quarter-boat, —

“Clear the way there! Fall back, and give me a fair chance!”

He had cleared away a long lance, and was poised it ready for a dart. We tumbled backward upon each other, to get out of range; the Malay, for a single moment off his guard, was passing the mizzen-mast when the fatal javelin sped on its mission, passing like a flash through his body, and pinning him literally to the mast! His life-blood gushed even into our faces as his weight and the convulsive movement of the body bore him to the deck, wrenching the lance-head out of the soft wood. A quiver or two, and all was over.

“Look to Manuel!” was the first order from the captain; and the Portuguese was brought aft, and his wound taken care of at once, as well as circumstances would permit. His life was saved, but the arm was worthless ever afterward, and he was discharged as a cripple at the next arrival in port.

The bodies of Othello and the unfortunate Celestial were committed to the waters of the Pacific, and the “Plowboy” sped on her way to Honolulu. It was found, upon investigation, that Othello had really robbed the medicine-chest, and had intoxicated himself with opiates, the doses of which he well knew how to regulate so as to produce the ecstatic delirium. But I venture to say no one of my shipmates can repress a shudder when he thinks of the scenes enacted on that moonlight night in the North Pacific Ocean.

SCARING KITTY.

BY NELL CLIFFORD.

"Now, Earle, I hope you will take good care of your little sister. Play gentle plays with her, and amuse her as well as you can. It gives mamma so much pleasure to have you do right, my son."

"Yes, mamma, I will."

"There, kiss me good-by, Earle; good-by, Kitty darling—mamma won't stay long," were Mrs. Mortimer's parting words as she entered the carriage that was to convey her to the city to do some shopping.

The children watched her out of sight, then returned to the playroom where they made themselves happy in various ways known to little folks.

Their home was in one of those pleasant suburban villages that cluster about Boston; and was one of the dearest and cosiest in the world. Earle and Kitty were its nestlings.

Earle was brave, and Kitty timid. Kitty was afraid of the dark, of mice; indeed, it is difficult to name anything she was not afraid of. But we left them making themselves happy in their mother's absence. They played keep house, horse, circus, hide and seek, and quite a medley of amusements to be sure, and representing the tastes and employments of both sexes.

Earle obeyed his mother's bidding, and was very careful of his sister till Joe Sander-son came, when the fun grew more boisterous. Joe was coarser grained in fibre, and his sports were in keeping with his make-up. He was possessed of no nervous tremors, and consequently had little sympathy for them in others. And he had a way of laughing down what he was pleased to call girl's plays, till he made Earle's face grow red with shame that he had ever enjoyed anything soft and womanish.

Earle suggested building houses to amuse Kitty; Joe said "pshaw," with such contemptuous energy, that the lad subsided so far into his inner me for a time, that an observer would have thought he had no choice in the matter of sports.

"What *shall* we play then?"

"Come here, and I'll tell you how to have downright fun." And Joe whispered

to Earle in an animated manner, to which Earle shook his head.

"We mustn't scare Kitty; mother wouldn't like it."

"Scare fiddlesticks! Didn't you tell me she was a coward? How can you expect her to be anything else, I would like to know, if you are always so tender of her nerves? The only way to make her brave is to give her a good breaking in. It will be doing a good thing, and we'll have lots of fun beside."

It was plausible to Earle; and he consented quite readily to the hastily arranged programme that presented itself to Joe's mind. It was to hide in out-of-the-way corners and covert holes; and when timid six-year old Kitty sought for them, they jumped out at her unexpectedly and yelled hideously, which caused every nerve in the little creature's body to tremble with excitement; but her terror was changed so quickly to merriment upon seeing who they were, that Earle came to think, with Joe that it was a good way to cure her excessive timidity. Joe at last tired of so tame a method of frightening her, and set about devising other means.

"I know a capital thing we can do; I learned it when I was up to Uncle Bill Sander-son's. Uncle Bill lives on a farm and raises ever so many pumpkins. He taught me how to make Jack lanterns out of them."

"What is a Jack lantern?" asked Earle, deeply interested.

"Don't you know? Why, it is a pumpkin made to look like a man's face."

"How is it done?"

"Uncle cut a square piece neatly out of the top of a pumpkin, and cleaned out all the seeds and waste matter. Then he cut holes for eyes, nose and mouth. In the evening he put a candle in it, and shut it up with the square he cut from the top. I tell you it was splendid. It would almost have scared me if I hadn't known all about it."

"I haven't any Jack lantern," said Earle.

"I know that, you goose. I have one I brought home from uncle's. I'll go home

and get it. While I am gone, you tease Kitty up stairs till I have everything ready."

"But it aint dark yet."

"We can shut the blinds and draw the curtains in the sitting-room, and it'll be dark enough."

Joe soon had his Jack lantern over; and to make it more hideous, he improvised a body for it out of an old coat and pants. When everything was arranged, Earle stole down to the sitting-room too.

"Why, it is perfectly splendid, Joe," he said, walking around it with boyish admiration. "But let us give Kitty a little warning, for I'm afraid it will frighten her too much. She is only a girl, you know."

"Nonsense! We wont warn her a bit. This will cure her if anything will. Wont it be jolly to hear her scream though? We shall have a chance to split our sides laughing."

"It is almost too dreadful," said Earle, anxiously.

"Hark! I hear her coming," said Joe. "Hide quick." And the boys crept under the table.

Little feet came pattering down the stairway, and through the hall, a hesitating hand was laid on the door knob, and Kitty's sweet voice called:

"Earle! Earle!" For the space of a second after she opened the door there was perfect silence, then Kitty fell as one dead. She didn't scream, as Joe said, and the boys crept forth from their place of concealment, their faces white with fright.

"O Kitty, Kitty, wake up, do!" cried Earle. "We didn't mean to scare you so."

"We were only in fun," bellowed Joe.

"O Joe, I am afraid she is dead," said Earle in an agony. "I wish mother were here. What will she say to me! Dear little darling sister, speak to Earle. Joe, we've killed her," for Kitty remained white and motionless as a corpse.

"Call Bridget," said Earle. Bridget was the maid, and at the summons came running up in hot haste.

"Och, and it is murthering the blessed Kitty you have been doing—shure it is Bridget O'Flaherty that is going raving distracted. Poor darling! the swate breath of her life just tuk out of her intirely by looking on that horrid craythure sinding out fire and brimstone from ivery fayture of his elegant face."

Bridget was a poor comforter, and poor help in this case; and Earle fairly groaned in his anguish. But at this moment Mrs. Mortimer opportunely arrived.

"What is the matter? What does it mean, Earle?" questioned Mrs. Mortimer, in a state of alarm.

"It means, mamma, that Joe and I have scared her to death." Earle's answer was broken by great sobs. "We frightened her with a Jack lantern."

Mrs. Mortimer said nothing further, but set about to restore Kitty. She dashed water over the pale face, chafed the limp fingers, yet it was long ere she succeeded in bringing her back to consciousness; and Kitty's stare was so vacant in expression that she feared for the child's reason. This continued for several days, but finally wore gradually away, though it was long ere she lost a sense of shuddering dread whenever Joe Sanderson came in her presence.

The lads were overjoyed at her recovery, particularly Earle, and he often said to his sister:

"I didn't mean to frighten you so, Kitty darling. I am so sorry for it—will you forgive me?"

Kitty kissed him and said yes, like the sweet child she was.

Earle's lesson was so severe that Mrs. Mortimer only enforced it by a few gentle grave words that he remembered all his life.

We trust the boy and girl readers of the Magazine will take this story to their hearts in such a way as to make them forever afraid of trying to frighten their nervous sensitive playmates; for it is a well known fact that the minds of many little people have been seriously injured by attempts to scare them "just for fun."

SEA AND SAVAGES.

BY W. H. MACY.

The story was told to me by Captain Devoll, who was himself the principal actor in its scenes, and who is still living to attest its truth, if need be.

I was at the time a boat-steerer in the "Parachute," and belonged to the larboard-boat, which was headed by Tom Anthony, our mate, as smart a whaleman as could be found throughout all the fleet. We struck a large sperm whale near the equator, and had given him his death-wound with the lance, but in hauling near enough for that purpose had received an ugly blow from his fluke, which stove in a couple of streaks of the light cedar board in our frail craft. A moment was sufficient to show that she was filling, and that bailing was quite useless.

The other boats were near at hand, and the second mate had already fastened to the whale; but, although his spout was tinged with blood, he still proved a tough and lively subject, starting off with race-horse speed, and always working to windward.

There was nothing for us to do but cut our line, for our boat, despite our efforts, was now full above the thwarts. As soon as the starboard-boat could get near to us, the mate transferred himself and crew to her, desiring to get on board the ship, which was lying to for that purpose, although the whale, with the waist and bow boats in tow, had already crossed her stern, bound to windward, and showing as yet no abatement of his speed.

"Devoll," said Mr. Anthony, "I want you to stay on the boat, and secure everything as far as you can, and stay here until we come to you with the ship. The old man won't run off at present, but will keep working to windward until the whale turns up. Keep your waif set, and we will have the run of you all the time."

"Ay, ay, sir," I answered cheerfully, for the whole arrangement was looked upon by whalemen as a mere matter of course in the line of duty.

It was not the first time in my own experience that I had been left adrift under similar circumstances. And so the starboard-

boat, loaded to her gunwales with her double crew, pulled away for the ship, which was lying aback, within a mile and a half of me.

The oars of our boat had been run athwart the gunwales, and lashed down by lanyards rigged for the very purpose of meeting an emergency like this. The boat was thus secured from rolling over, as she otherwise might have done, lying now completely water-logged, and her gunwales just level with the sea.

I obeyed the mate's orders by securing in its place everything which might be liable to float away, and then planting my waif or flag on the logger-head, I sat down by it on the stern-sheets, being in a position a little higher than the other parts of the boat, like a small island rising just above the sea-level.

Sharks were numerous around me, and bold in their approaches; but they were of the common, gray species, and I did not stand in much fear of them. Now and then, as one appeared too familiar, I would rap him over the nose with a paddle; but after a while I had a new source of anxiety which kept my attention fixed upon the manœuvres of the ship.

She had taken up the starboard-boat, and while she was being secured on the cranes had filled her maintopsail, and made sail on a wind to work up toward the fast-boats. The whale must be secured first, if possible, and the stoven boat in my charge, being directly under her lee, could be taken care of afterward.

But it was getting quite late in the day, and the whale led the boats a long and weary siege before he gave up the ghost. To add to my uneasiness, a dark squall loomed up on the weather horizon, and soon assumed rather a threatening appearance. I could do absolutely nothing but await the progress of events; and this very inaction was terrible.

The sun had already dipped before the squall struck the ship, and at my last view of her she had already taken in all her light canvas, and appeared to be quite near the

fast boats, though from my low position at the surface of the ocean my horizon of vision was not very extensive. But the squall and night coming on together, completely hid everything from view, and, unlike most tropical squalls, this was a long one, lasting, as near as I could judge, two or three hours. The force of the wind was not great, after the first puff was over; but the rain poured down in torrents, and everything was shrouded in inky darkness. I had no means of setting a light, even after the rain was over, for the water had found its way into the lantern-keg lashed underneath the stern-sheets, and everything it contained was soaked so as to be useless.

I strained my eyes to get a glimpse of the ship, or of a signal-light; but all to no purpose. My situation was now such as to fill my mind with great anxiety, and this anxiety became the more terrible when, after some hours had passed, I discovered by the bearings of several stars which had come into view that the wind had completely shifted. The long and heavy squall had preceded this great change, and what is known as the westerly monsoon had set in, blowing quite counter to the prevailing trade winds. I was now, therefore, well to windward of the ship.

I could do nothing by attempting to carry the sail, and run to leeward; for the boat, completely submerged, would be entirely unmanageable as soon as the mast should be stepped. Lying as she was, I should drift off to leeward some distance before daylight; but if the ship lay with the whale alongside she would drift faster than my boat. If she made sail to beat up, towing the whale, her progress would be slow, and a little miscalculation might cause her to pass me too far off for a signal-lantern to be seen. Even if I saw it I had no possible means of answering it, or of making known my own position. I could do nothing but sit where I was, just out of reach of the sharks, and blow fierce blasts from time to time on the little tin fog-horn.

Thus the terribly anxious hours wore away until, in the small hours of the morning, I heard the sound of a gun several miles distant, and apparently dead to windward of me.

To waste any more breath in blowing my tin pipes would be sheer folly. The ship had passed me, and there was no hope except in the chance of her returning to lee-

ward again during the day. I listened intently, but heard no more guns; and when daylight broke, and the sun came up clear and bright, there was nothing to be seen. I was alone upon the broad ocean.

There was some water in the boat-keg, which I had taken care to secure as high up as possible, at my side, and now found it tolerably good, though a little brackish from the sea-water which had found its way into it when the boat first sank. A few hard biscuits in a tarpaulin bag had also been taken care of in a partially damaged state, and thus I satisfied the immediate cravings of nature. I opened the wet sail, and festooned it in such a way as to afford some shelter from the rays of a tropical sun, and thus I spent the whole day alternating between hope and despair, and straining my vision to the utmost in a vain wish that relief might come. After a last look around the horizon at nightfall I lay down quite exhausted, and taking a turn of rope around my body and the loggerhead, to guard against the possibility of rolling off into the sea, soon fell into the deep sleep which I so much needed.

My slumber continued sound and unbroken for many hours, for the first streaks of approaching day were apparent in the sky when I became conscious of the sound of a faint human voice close at hand. I jumped to my feet, all aglow with excitement, and there, looming in gray darkness, within half a stone's throw of me, lay a boat or canoe of some sort, in which I presently made out four human figures. They appeared to be resting on their paddles, and looking at me in silence.

"Hollo!" I roared with all the force of a pair of lungs which in those days were none of the weakest. "Boat ahoy!"

No reply was made to me, but some words were exchanged between those in the canoe, and I heard the voice of a female. I took in the situation at once. I knew that the ship on the day when we struck the whale was not far from the most weatherly island of the Gilbert group, for I had overheard the mate say as much; though I was not in the habit of interesting myself at all in the navigation department. This, then, must be a canoe from one of these islands with a party who had lost their reckoning, and got adrift, as I had heard was quite often the case. I continued to hail them, saying everything I could to make them

come nearer; but, as all this was said in English, it might as well have been Greek to them, as their own jumble of guttural sounds was to my ears and understanding.

They continued to be very shy and wary as long as it was dark, and our parley in unknown tongues was not at all satisfactory. But after having reconnoitred by daylight they ventured to paddle up alongside of my sunken craft, and we began to understand each other somewhat better.

There were two men and two women in the canoe, all very aged, and perfectly hideous in appearance. One of the women was humpbacked, and one of the men a very dwarf in stature, while the taller man had lost one eye, and the best-looking woman had a deformity in one foot.

It was a complete mystery to me what this crew of old and nearly helpless people were doing out in this frail shallop so far from land, — whence they came, or whither bound.

The one-eyed man pointed to a cut on his breast in the form of a cross, and seemed to lay particular stress upon this in way of explanation; but I was none the wiser for all this jargon. I now observed that all four of my new acquaintances had this peculiar cross on the breast, the wounds being apparently still raw and sore, as if recently made.

They had been out, by their own account, only three days, and had a stock of food, in the form of sheets of sweet paste rolled up like leather, sufficient to last them three or four days more, with six cocoanut-shells full of water, of which they were very careful, now and then barely wetting their parched lips with it.

I could not learn that they were bound to any particular place, or had any special object in drifting upon the ocean. As they appeared to be in no hurry, but to take their cast-away life very coolly, I kept them in company with me all day, and at night made their canoe fast to the loggerhead, while we all slept, more or less, though one or two were at all times on the look-out. But another morning came clear and pleasant, and still no sign of the "Parachute," which I doubted not must be cruising the ground over in search of me.

I now proposed to my stoical old cripples to abandon my own craft, and ship on board of theirs; for the canoe was ample enough to accommodate me, and I thought we

might reach land somewhere. At any rate, the chance for life was much better than where I then was, to die of hunger and thirst, without the power even to make an effort.

The old people received the proposal quite as calmly as they did everything else, seeming neither pleased nor displeased. It was enough for me that they raised no objection, and I at once transferred myself to the canoe, taking the boat-keg, still containing a gallon or more of water. I also took a boat-hook and a couple of paddles, abandoning everything else to its fate.

As I jumped into the canoe I gave her a shove off from the boat, and then, seizing a paddle, began to ply it lustily, heading southward as nearly as I could estimate the course, for I judged our chance was good of finding land in that direction.

The monsoon had blown out, and we now had the regular trade winds which are to be looked for in that part of the ocean.

It was soon evident that I could not get much help from my companions in propelling the canoe, for not only were they all old and feeble, but they seemed to have no desire to exert themselves, and did not care which way the craft went, or whether she went at all. I was more mystified at this apathy, which so contrasted with my own eagerness to be doing something, and I confess I had half a mind to knock them all on the head, throw them over to the sharks, and take sole charge of the canoe myself. I thought better of that, however, and kept on good terms with them all.

Our boat was but a rickety affair, and was built, like all those used at this group of islands, of hundreds of small pieces of wood lashed together, — for there are no trees growing there suitable for making dug-outs. The whole fabric is full of small holes; for the seizings, which lash the various pieces together, and to stop these holes, a kind of mortar or cement is used.

But the canoes are never tight. It is, as sailors would say, "pump, or sink," at all times; and in our case the old humpbacked woman was almost constantly employed in bailing.

These canoes are generally propelled by a large leg-of-mutton sail, made of matting, under which they can make very swift headway; but these old people, for what cause I did not then understand, were at sea without any sail, and had nothing to depend

upon but the paddles in their feeble hands. I kept up my spirits with the thought that I was rather better off now than when lying on the sunken boat; but I was hardly less lonely than before, for there was nothing attractive about my fellow-voyagers, and we were very indifferent company for each other.

The weather continued moderate, however, and at times I plied my paddles, going always in a southerly direction; but this, after all, was of little consequence, and I decided that I might as well save my strength, and let her drift whither she would, always keeping a sharp lookout.

Thus matters went on for two days, and our little stock of food and water was growing beautifully less, though we kept ourselves on very short allowances.

During the second night we heard what I was sure must be the roar of breakers on a coral reef, and the sound filled me with new life. I headed the canoe in the direction of the sound, and putting my strength to the paddles tried to infuse some of my own spirit into the savages; but, to my utter astonishment, they appeared disposed to work against me, and to turn the boat's head in a different direction.

I soon became convinced that they as well as myself heard the roar of breakers, and knew of the near vicinity of land, but did not want to approach it. I was more than ever mystified, and felt again the impulse to pitch them all into the sea, — for I had no stomach for starving to death in a canoe to gratify any eccentricity of those old blockheads. I was young and vigorous, and the love of life was all-powerful within me.

They jabbered and sputtered and pointed to those ugly wounds on their breasts; but I was quite at a loss to understand the meaning of it all.

The noise of the breakers gradually grew louder, and it was plain that the current was setting us bodily toward the island.

So I gave up exerting myself, and waited quietly for daylight. And there, looming in the mist of the morning, lay a low coral island, with cocoanut and pandanus trees, within three miles of us, — a sight which, while it filled me with hope and delight, seemed to plunge the old people into a kind of stupor. They all sat with their gaze fixed upon the island, and now and then exchanged a few words in low, guttural tones, without the slightest animation.

Soon a canoe, under sail, was seen approaching us, then another, and then the faces of my companions became more expressive, and there was more earnestness in their conferences. The old lady with the club-foot made a few convulsive dips of her paddle in the water, as if to attempt escape: but the others apparently convinced her of her folly by a few words spoken, as I thought, in a tone of reproach; and, giving up all efforts, she sat like the rest awaiting the coming of the canoes from the islands.

The first one which bore down upon us was manned by six men, who went so wild with excitement as they saw what sort of prize had fallen into their hands, and roared and shouted so fiercely for the information of their friends in the rear, that I thought Bedlam had indeed broken loose. I was not without some fears as to the treatment I should receive from these barbarians, but my anxiety for my own safety was quite overborne by my curiosity to know the meaning of the strange voyage of my aged comrades.

The second canoe that came within hail contained among its crew a black man, — a tall, wiry fellow, naked, like the islanders, but evidently, from his speech, an American negro. He addressed himself at once to me, eager to know how I came to be in such strange company, and a few words were sufficient to explain it to him. He then satisfied my curiosity about the old people, revealing to me a chapter of the horrors of barbarian life of which I had heard and read, but which I had never until now fully realized.

The negro, whose name was Jake, had been living for two years on the island of Arorai, — known to seamen as Hope Island, — which was now in sight. The old folks, it appeared, had been set adrift from Byron's, which lay in a northeasterly direction from us. It was a general custom, he said, on the islands of this group to call the tribe together two or three times a year, and act upon the case of all those who appeared to be superannuated.

Old men and women who had quite outlived their usefulness, so as to become a burden upon the community, and had not seen the propriety of dying when they ought to have done so, were put into old canoes, with a small stock of provisions and water, and with solemn ceremonies were pushed out into the Pacific Ocean to take their

chance. Each person so condemned to be cast upon the waters received the mark of the cross on the breast, deeply cut with a shark's tooth, and this mark being well understood at all the islands of the group rendered the persons liable to be put to death at sight.

None of the tribes ever killed their own invalids or aged people, but all looked upon it as a religious duty to kill all those with the fatal mark upon them who might fall in their way after having been set adrift from any other island.

"These old people will be killed within twenty-four hours after they land," said he. "They will be well fed and cared for to-night, and everything done to get their minds in the right state for the sacrifice, and a grand pow-wow will be held over them at the council-house up there; but tomorrow morning they will all be speared or stoned to death at sunrise."

"This is too horrible," said I, "even to think of!"

"Not at all," he answered, "after you once get used to thinking of it. You see, the old codgers don't mind this kind of death very much, but take it as a matter of course. It's the law of all the islands."

"And what will be done with me?" I inquired.

For I had been so absorbed by these horrors which the black had told me that I had not until now asked what was to be my fate.

"Oh, you're in no danger if you carry sail so as to get the right side of the old fellows in authority. I ran away from a ship and came ashore here three years ago, and here I am alive yet, — though I must allow that I have often been in a tight place, and several times would have sold my life mighty cheap. But about that boat of yours that you left drifting? If we could get her now she would be the greatest prize we could have to use in the lagoon. Don't you suppose we could find her if we started out with the canoes today, and spread our chances? You could n't have been at a great distance from this island, for you've been only one day and night in the canoe, and, having no sail, you must have come here mostly by the drift of the southwest current."

"That's true," said I. "I don't think the boat is more than twenty-five or thirty miles from us, — not so far, indeed; for of

course she has been drifting this way all the time."

By this time our party had become quite numerous, several more canoes having joined us, and the old folks were taken in charge with some ceremony, — being placed under strong escort in the middle of the fleet. I got into the canoe with Jake and his gang, and we started off for the shore amid a chorus of wild yells, constantly swelling by the addition of re-enforcements, — for all the canoes seemed mustering as if for a grand regatta.

But the recovery of the sunken boat was the subject always uppermost in Jake's mind, and he held long conferences in the native gibberish with a stout chief who plied the forward paddle, and who he told me was his special friend and protector.

Jake soon announced to me that they had arranged the matter together, and would start on the expedition as soon as they could make the little preparations necessary.

The scene after we entered the lagoon was one of rare beauty, and entirely novel to my eyes; but my mind was so full of anxiety about my own future, and of horror at the fate in store for the poor old Byron Islanders, that I had no enjoyment of it. The wretched victims, still as stupid and stoical as ever, were hurried away among an excited rabble as soon as they landed, the women and children of all ages joining in the hue and cry, — for these slaughters of the ancients are always occasions of jubilee.

But the negro and Tackatoo, his friend, took me in another direction; and I was not sorry to feel myself under their special care. Jake's cupidity was greatly excited about the boat, the very prize which he desired to own, and one which he could never buy from any passing ship. If we could find her, and take her back to Arorai, she might be repaired by any sailor of ordinary skill.

After refreshing ourselves we put a stock of provisions and water into the canoe, and within an hour after landing were again paddling out of the lagoon, bound away in quest of the disabled whale-boat. I saw no more of the old men and women from Byron's Island; but Jake told me that their doom was fixed: they were to die at sunrise next morning, and I had no desire to witness their murder.

Jake and I were together in one canoe,

Tackatoo having charge of the other, both being well provided with sails, and having a crew of six paddle-men to each. With a favoring breeze we skimmed away to the northward at such a rate that within two hours we had seen the island nearly below the horizon, the tops of the distant cocoanut trees appearing to grow directly out of the sea.

We had separated, running on parallel courses about two miles apart, so as to spread the chances of catching sight of the waif, or flag, which I had left still floating above the loggerhead when I abandoned the boat. When we judged ourselves fifteen miles from Arorai, — having long since lost sight of it entirely, — we diverged still more, making stretches or zig-zag courses, but still working on a general northerly course through the afternoon.

It was nearly sundown when Tackatoo, who was then in advance of us, made a signal for us to close with him, for he had discovered the prize.

We were alongside of the sunken boat in half an hour more; and took full possession, finding everything much the same as I had left it.

We had hoped to be able to stop the leaks with a quantity of the mortar such as is used for the canoes, and which we had brought with us for that purpose. In this case we might have kept her free by bailing, and thus gone back in triumph. But this, after much effort, we found to be impossible, and there was no better course than to take her in tow, water-logged as she was.

I got into her myself, taking some water and a bunch of cocoanuts with me, and took up my old position on the stern-sheets to control her with the steering-oars, while the two canoes hooked on, one ahead of the other, like a strong team, exerted all the power of their great sails and paddles.

But our progress was necessarily very slow, and it soon shut dark, with only the stars to steer by, and a long night before us, though the weather was warm and pleasant enough.

Tackatoo led the van of the fleet, and seemed to have perfect confidence in his ability to navigate us back to the island.

Thus we jogged on for several hours, while my mind ran upon the prospects ahead of me in the near future, — which, I must say, were not at all to my taste. I

thought of the barbarity which demanded, as a sort of religious duty, that the old people cast upon their shores should be put to death, while those of their own tribe and kin who became superannuated must in like manner be set adrift to take their chance of perishing by sea or savage.

I had always held the beach-comber's life in contempt, and did not at all relish the thought of existing at the mercy of such heathen, any one of whom might, at short notice, take it into his eccentric pate to knock me on the head with a lump of coral, or impale me upon his spear.

It must have been past midnight when my attention was attracted by a flash of light against the dark sky to windward. I was not the only one who saw it, for I heard the grunting comments of those in the canoe ahead of me; but when I called out to Jake to ask his opinion he at once ignored the whole matter. But it was not long before it was seen again and again, evidently coming nearer to us; and now the odor of scraps and boiling oil, always so grateful to the whalemen's senses, came down on the breeze. It was a ship boiling, and, by the appearance of things, she must pass very near to us.

Of course all the party but myself were interested in letting her pass without knowledge of our presence, while I was equally determined to communicate with her, even at a great risk of my life. On she came, until in the flashes of light portions of her sails and rigging could be seen.

I heard a few earnest words pass between the black and Tackatoo, and presently perceived the canoe of the latter, which until now had been leading, drifting silently down toward me. The intention was evidently to surprise and secure me before I could give the alarm.

The moment for action had come. I rushed to the bow of the boat, severed with a single cut the warp by which I was being towed, raised the tin fog-horn to my lips, and sent a long blast through it. I then caught up the boat-spade, — a terrible weapon in the hands of a desperate man, — and, taking my position amidships, up to my waist in water, stood at bay, resolved to fight to the last for liberty.

My determined attitude caused a hesitation on the part of my savage assailants, and I improved every moment of the delay by sounding repeated blasts on the horn.

My defensive position was a strong one, I had a long, slender warp attached to the pole of the spade expressly for darting and hauling it back, — while those in the canoe had no weapon with them more effective than paddles, at which I could laugh.

My horn was already heard by those on board, for the fire-light now showed several men on the bow and knight-heads, as if looking eagerly for something. I had a canoe and six men on each side of me, watching for an advantage; but it was plain to my foes that if either of them ventured beyond safe limits some of the party must almost certainly lose their lives before they could overpower me, and indeed, if the ship interfered in the contest, they would stand no chance at all.

Something must be done quickly, and Jake made a bold push by a couple of strokes of his paddles, bringing him within easy dart of me. My spade missed him, but a yell of mortal agony told that one of his boat's crew had probably paid for his rashness with his life. While in the act of hauling back my weapon, a paddle, hurled from the canoe on the other side, struck me on the shoulder; but as I faced about, ready for another dart, the wary Tackatoo and his boats were slipping swiftly away into the darkness, and my warp brought up with a jerk, the spade falling short of its mark.

I was safe, for the ship — my own ship, the "Parachute" — was rounding to, and lowering a boat to come to the rescue, and the light of her try-fires fell upon the two great sails of matting receding in the distance as the barbarians fled with all speed, abandoning any further attempt to save the much-coveted whale-boat.

"Hollo, Devoll!" cried Mr. Anthony, as he recognized me; "what have you been doing, — been fighting sharks all this time?"

"Human sharks," said I. "There they go; you see their sails looming up down yonder. You were just in time to save me from being carried back to Arorai. I have been there once already."

"What?" roared the mate. "You must have been dreaming, my boy."

"Well, if your shoulder was as lame as mine, you 'd know it was no dream; and I reckon one poor savage, cut open with this boat-spade, has found it a most dreadful reality."

"Well, never mind; keep the yarn until we get aboard, and then we 'll all listen to it. I've got back my favorite boat, and it will be as good as new with a little tinkering, and what 's more to the purpose, we've got you safe and sound, when we all thought you had gone to Davy Jones's locker long ago."

SEEING THE NEW MOON.

BY ETHELIN B. BRANDE.

"I saw the moon over my right shoulder!"

A merry, girlish voice made the exclamation, and the enthusiasm with which it was uttered proved the real satisfaction felt by the speaker, and the pleasure which so trifling a circumstance evidently imparted to her.

"And what does the omen portend?" inquired her companion, — an ordinary-looking and uninteresting personage, who was evidently her brother, and apparently twice as old and less than half as romantic as the young lady.

"Why, good luck, of course! Who ever heard of anything but good fortune befalling one who sees the new moon over the right shoulder the first evening of its appearance?"

A more than usually thoughtful look stole over the face of the gentleman, and, for a moment or two, he was silent. Then, with a smile at his own thoughts, he seemed to dismiss the sad, regretful feelings aroused by the subject they were discussing, and he carefully replied. —

"Yes, yes, dear; but my faith in omens has been very slight indeed since I found that horse-shoe, and within twenty-four hours thereafter had my arm fractured, my nose nearly flattened to my face, and my pet mustache ruined completely by the animal who was honored so much as to be shod with that particular shoe. And this whim about new moons is quite as unreliable as the other; for, one fine evening in May, 1878, I saw Miss Luna with eyes right, and very soon afterward found myself surrounded by the enemy upon nearly all sides, our brigade broken up, our artillery captured, and all who were able to retreat double-quicking back to the re-enforcements, a distance of a mile, with the enemy

urging us to the top of our speed by persuasive arguments in the shape of minie balls."

"O brother!" exclaimed the spoiled child, "why can't you believe in any of the nice little superstitions which are so very harmless, and yet so very pleasant to believe in, giving us the pleasure of anticipation, even when the reality never verifies the omen?"

"Would you like to know what destroyed the last vestige of the abundant stock of romance and childish anticipation which was once no less my inheritance than it is now yours? I am always ready to give a reason for the faith which is within me; and just now I am in the mood to explain how it is that faith in omens is no longer within me."

"By all means, my dear sir. You can consider yourself arraigned before the high-priest of Diana's temple, upon a charge of heresy; and, unless you can disprove the grave charge, or show good cause for your disbelief, you may expect to have her countenance withdrawn from you; and henceforth her favors granted to you shall be all moonshine; and ultimately you must become a confirmed lunatic unless you find her continually gazing upon you over the left."

"Proceed, you unbelieving heretic, and show cause, if you have, why you no longer Diana obey. But speak no disrespectful word, nor dare her name profane, lest punishment o'ertake thee, and vengeance terrible!"

This mock-heroic speech, delivered with a tragic stage air which was truly ludicrous, called forth a hearty laugh; and when I joined the brother and sister to avoid being an eavesdropper, he seemed in no wise disconcerted, but proceeded to give his sister

and myself the benefit of his experience in omens.

"You know, sis, that I was never a great beau among the ladies, and was, consequently, exempt from all those hopes and fears, anxieties and tribulations which attend young men who cultivate a taste for the society of ladies, and constantly imagine themselves in love with some fair damsel.

"I am very sure that my heart has a capacity for loving some woman with an absorbing passion; but, since fate has never thrown my affinity and myself together, it follows that my affections are in a fearfully undeveloped state; or rather the process of development undergone by them has been a damage to the germs of love, which, under favorable circumstance, might have flourished and grown until I became the most loving of husbands, instead of what I now am, — a cold-hearted old bachelor.

"I always imagined that if once my heart became interested in a subject, it would be all up with me; and for that reason I was careful to guard all the avenues to my weak point with jealous care. However, 'the best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft a-glee;' and at last a pretty girl of my acquaintance, without effort or intention of her own, but simply by the natural power which woman possesses, had won over my sentiments and carried all the outposts of my heart.

"Of course it was the part of wisdom for me to make terms, if possible, for I felt sure that I could not withstand a siege, since the enemy had without effort carried all the approaches, and I had reason to suspect the fidelity of the garrison. Accordingly, I sent out a flag of truce, asking for an interview, which was granted.

"I frankly told her the situation I was in, and proposed to capitulate, form a treaty of alliance, and asked only to receive protection from the powers.

"She asked time to consider, disclaimed all thought of conquest, professed to be astonished that I was not better prepared to defend myself; and the upshot of it all was that she declined to make terms with me at all, and turned her attention in another direction.

"I had seen an army march around a small fort which was n't worth attacking, and knew how bare and desolate the country round was left. I also knew that when

a garrison has once been on the point of surrender, it is easy to capture it afterwards. Consequently, I had no thought of making desperate resistance in case my heart should ever again be threatened, and I took no care to mislead or divert the enemy from an attack.

"As might have been expected, it was not very long before I was entirely surrendered, and all hope of escape destroyed.

"Girls, I thought I was in love with my very good friend, the young lady whose charms first taught me what love meant. But now I realize that I was not so far gone as I might have been; though I believe that had she then cared as much for me as I did for her, and we had united our destinies, we should have been a happy, loving couple. But I formed an acquaintance with another lady, — one I had met once before, — and here comes in the omen.

"An evening or two before I met her, I was returning to my boarding-place, and, chancing to glance up toward the clear, starlit sky, I saw the young moon off to the right, — just a mere silver penciling apparently around one side of a ball, — half defined against the blue sky. Immediately I thought of the old childish superstition concerning the omen; and then occurred to me the fact that just before I learned my fate from the lips of my first love, I had the temerity to laugh at the idea of approaching danger when I first gazed on the new moon from an unfavorable position, and I half acknowledged then that there was something in the sign after all.

"The idea soon passed from my mind again, and I nearly forgot the circumstance until I started for a distant town with my horse and carriage; and upon the road, which was not a much frequented one, I found two horse-shoes, both nearly new, and lying perhaps a mile apart.

"My companion remarked that I was 'in for good luck, if there was anything in signs,' and then I thought of Miss Luna's promising look bestowed upon me so lately, and I really began to wonder in what form my good fortune was likely to appear.

"Arrived at the house of my friend, almost the first person I met, was — shall I call her my affinity? or shall I designate her as the only woman I ever loved?

"At any rate, I saw a stylish girl, for the second time, and on the strength of our

former introduction, I treated her as an old friend.

"During my stay we became very intimate, and I soon discovered that I must get away from that place, or make a declaration of love on very short notice.

"I could not tell whether she even liked me as a friend, so exactly alike did she treat all her male acquaintances, and so engaging and agreeable was she to each and every one.

"I could hardly credit my own senses, or believe that any woman had power to sway my feelings as did the comparative stranger.

"The old love was nothing, absolutely nothing, and I trembled as I reflected upon the consequences of a disappointment here, since I knew how miserable I felt before, when in reality I never began to be in love at all until past that time, and possibly — nay, probably — she felt perfectly indifferent toward me.

"So I left sooner than I otherwise should have done, and yet could not avoid a betrayal of my feelings by requesting a correspondence.

"She frankly complied, and I took my departure. But absent or present she had me entirely subjugated, and after a shockingly condensed age of torture, I wrote my first love-letter.

"I told her that I wished to correspond with a view to marriage, and asked permission to do so. She replied as most ladies would, with an indecisive answer, and that finally brought about a meeting again, and of course I proposed. She asked for time to consider, and at the time her answer was to be given, I received a note from her which set forth her views of matrimony: that love should be perfect between husband and wife, no outside influence should exist, and so forth, and ending with: —

"I intend to give my husband my first and only love. If you can say truly that you love no other woman, I accept your love; if not, it is better that we part now, than live our lives in discontent and misery. I would like an answer from your own lips, if you choose to give it."

"I saw her immediately, told her the truth, expressed my views, and urged her to decide then. When I left her she was my affianced wife; and I was nearly overwhelmed with joy, and not a little surprised, too, that fate should at last thus

recompense me for all the kicks and cuffs of fortune which I had encountered.

"I could not be with her so often as I wished, but we corresponded regularly; and, after some months, the day was set when we were to be married.

"I was very much occupied with business affairs which could not very well wait because they were related to our future welfare, and perhaps was not so attentive as she wished.

"At any rate, I received a letter from her, stating that our marriage must be deferred several months, and, if I wished, she would release me from our engagement.

"I was surprised, as you may imagine, and immediately replied by letter, stating that I wished no release. If she did, or if she disturbed her own heart in the least, to say so then.

"Her answer was affectionate and straight-forward.

"She loved me with her whole heart, was pained that I doubted her, not disposed to annul our engagement unless I desired it. Her parents objected to an early marriage; and, though she was of competent age, she wished to be guided by them instead of her own wishes.

"I did not doubt her truth; and yet I felt uneasy. I was tired, or I should have seen her at once. Our engagement was a secret, as she wished it to be; and if I left home suddenly it might arouse the babblers, and then she would be offended, as I promised to do nothing to excite suspicion.

"So I let affairs take their course, and trusted to her love and good omens to make everything right.

"Again I saw the young moon in a favorable light, and so nervous and fidgety was I becoming, that I really attached significance to the fact, and felt encouraged, thereby, amazingly.

"Judge, then, of the effect produced, when, after a silence of two weeks, she wrote that she felt it her duty to tell me that her love for me was pretty much moonshine. 'I loved you once,' she wrote, 'but when I think of living with you for life, let us be happy or not, it makes me shudder; for my love seems mixed with fear too much to be real. Therefore, it is my resolve never to marry until I have more confidence in men than I have now, and I only hope you will not hate me for what has happened.'

"I saw her once more, and heard from her lips the confirmation of the resolve she had taken.

"I did n't make much of a row about it: it is n't my way. I have learned to think of her as dead, and so she is to me. Very much of my faith in woman's truthfulness is destroyed, though I know there are some noble women. I have ceased to wonder what was the cause of her conduct, or to attempt a solution of the question whether she was really my affinity. At any rate, I was not hers, any more than the lady who claimed that A. Ward was hers.

"I would like to know if she ever really cared for me, for it is humiliating to think one has been loving a false, deceitful coquette, and wasting pure, heartfelt affection upon such a desert air as that. I cannot forget her either, though I may forgive. But one thing is entirely destroyed, and that is my belief in omens; especially where horse-shoes and the moon are concerned."

There was silence for a moment or two when he paused, and I fancied the sister was too much occupied with this revelation of hidden secrets to think of making a reply.

~~But~~ she suddenly threw her arms about his neck, and said, —

"Noble brother, mine, you are honorably acquitted of the charge! But still I shall insist that, except where ladies are concerned, these omens are infallible. You can't expect the moon, with a half a dozen old horse-shoes in the bargain, to prevail against the will of a woman; though with any ordinary obstacles, either one would be all-powerful.

"You need n't look at the moon at all if you don't want to; but I saw a splendid-looking man with a foreign air, at the ball last night, and I am determined to subjugate him at all hazards. Another lady has the preference now; but I am sure of good luck, for 'I saw the moon over my right shoulder.'"

SHIRLEY.

BY MARY FRANCES WILLIAMS.

"Bessie, how deep are you going to dig that hole?"

"Oh, I shall not go any further than China," said Bessie, bringing up another shovelful of earth from the centre of her flower-bed, while I leaned out of the window and watched her operations.

"What are you going to plant there, anyhow?" I pursued.

"That rose-bush which Harry brought home and left in the cellar, a week ago; I know she will never set it out. But I've an impression that gardening is not my forte," said Bessie, as she planted the shovel in her excavation and straightened up to wipe her perspiring brow. "I've got a crick in my back, and a blister on each of my hands. I think it must be fourteen million miles to China! The fact is, this establishment wants a man!"

"The age wants men, large-hearted, manly men!" I quoted.

To which Bessie made answer, —

"I should n't care so much about the size of his heart, if his hands were only in reasonable proportion to the weight of neighbor Smith's shovel!"

Here the front gate was heard to slam with an unmistakable accent, and I exclaimed, —

"Here comes Harry from the post-office! And she has a letter from Shirley; I can see it in her air," I added, as my youngest sister came around the corner of the house, fair and dainty in her cool, white muslin, with a blue-ribboned sun-hat shading her yellow curls.

"Of course I have; and here's a letter for you, and one for Bess," said Harry, tossing a long, lilac-tinted envelope to Bessie, and handing me a plain white one, — commercial size, and no monogram.

"From Shirley," said I.

"From Ruth," said Bessie; and she came and leaned on the window-sill to read her letter, while I sat down and opened mine.

Presently, Bessie remarked, —

"Here's Ruth writing me all about her two suitors, and asking my advice as to which of them she shall take; and letting

out at every second word which one she means to take; the little goose!"

"Tell her it does n't make a straw's difference which one she takes," I observed, without looking up from my letter. "She's dead sure in a couple of years to wish she'd taken the other!"

"Don't be cynical, Florinda. I have the pleasure of informing you that the one whom Ruth is going to take is our beloved cousin Shirley."

"What?"

"Yes: he has been paying court to her ever since she made that visit to Scarswood, last summer. His opportunities are somewhat limited, to be sure; but it is plain to me that he has made a good impression. His rival is Gilbert Dare, and she pretends to be hesitating between the two; but she cannot deceive me. She is in love with Shirley!"

"Shows her taste," said I.

Bessie resumed her reading. After a moment, she cried out, —

"Oh, how nice!"

"What now?" I asked.

"Ruth is coming tomorrow."

"And Shirley is coming the day after. Very nice!" said I, laying down my letter, with a look of resignation. "It is very pleasant to have Shirley here, and I've always enjoyed Ruth's visits; but a pair of interesting lovers is another matter!"

"Now, I think it will be charming," remarked Harry, who had come in and thrown her hat upon the table and herself upon the sofa. "If only Gilbert Dare would come too, there'd be no end of fun!"

"He is coming," said Bessie, looking rather grave. "Susy Smith told me so. You know he is a cousin of the Smiths', and they are expecting a visit from him shortly."

Harry clapped her hands.

"Oh, how jolly! Gilbert Dare is twice as handsome as Shirley, and three times as captivating. It will be just as good as a novel!"

"Harry, you're a heartless little wretch!" said Bessie indignantly.

I rose up with a resolute air, and begun to tie on a big apron.

"If we are to have company," I said, "there must be some cooking done. What can we have for breakfast?"

"Strawberries," said Harry.

"Oysters," suggested Bessie.

"Good gracious! Oysters in June, and strawberries at breakfast-time! Harry, do you know how to make pan-cakes?"

"Of course I do," answered Harry promptly. "You take some flour, and—and a frying-pan"—and this was the extent of Harry's information.

"Ask Mrs. Smith; she knows how to cook everything."

This was Bessie's advice. Harry jumped up, exclaiming,—

"I'll run over and ask her; and I will find out when Gilbert is coming!"

And away went Harry, in great glee, while Bessie and I resolved ourselves into a committee on the culinary situation, and descended to the kitchen to investigate. As we did not keep a "help," even one guest made a serious difference in the amount of our household labors; and the advent of two together was an occasion which called for "grave deliberation and careful preparation."

Even though Ruth Carey and Shirley Bradford were both our cousins, in different degrees. Shirley was the son of my father's brother, and a special crony of mine; while Ruth was "related on the mother's side," and was Bessie's bosom friend. If they made a match, I thought I should be as well pleased as Bessie; but I did not exactly fancy the prospect of having the match made under our roof. I have usually found that love-making is rather dreary business to an interested but outside party, when the said party is getting pretty well past the love-making age herself.

However, Ruth arrived in due season; and on the next day came Shirley, bringing the gun and fishing-rod which generally accompanied him on his visits to our rural locality; though I don't remember that he ever caught anything or shot anything. His surprise at meeting Ruth was evidently as genuine as his pleasure, though Harry pretended to be skeptical about it.

That wicked Harry was in her own element when she was in mischief. She hastened to let Ruth know that Gilbert Dare

was coming to spend some weeks with our neighbors next door; and I did not much blame Shirley for the impolite expression which he only half smothered in his mustache, when he heard that piece of information. Certainly, handsome Gilbert Dare was not a rival whom it was pleasant to have so near at hand.

A few days after Shirley's arrival, Harry presented herself at the dinner-table with a cluster of Susy Smith's blush roses in her hair, and rather more than her usual look of *diablerie* in her eyes, as she announced that Gilbert Dare had come.

"Susy and he are coming over here to tea," she added. "I invited them. Gilbert looked immensely pleased when I told him that Ruth was here. Is n't he a conquest of yours, Ruth? Seems to me I've heard so."

"Where do you hear so much nonsense, Harry?" said Ruth easily; but she blushed a little, and kept her eyes carefully turned away from Shirley's. If that young gentleman's expression was any index to the nature of his thoughts, they were anything but amiable.

I took the first occasion to privately remonstrate with Harry; but she only laughed, and retorted,—

"Nonsense, Flo: I believe in fair play. If you and Bess are going to devote yourselves to the advancement and protection of Shirley's suit, I shall constitute myself Gilbert's guardian angel; and I flatter myself that my favorite stands as good a chance as yours, Florabella!"

I wish to state, for the reader's benefit, that my baptismal appellation is Flora; but my sisters, being named respectively Elizabeth and Harriet, consider it too romantic for the family. They manifest this opinion and amuse themselves by adjusting the poor little name to an infinite variety of *sentimental* and *high-flown* changes. Time was when I did not object to this; but when one is not so young as one used to be, Florabella sounds a little inappropriate, and one would prefer to be called Sarah Jane or Mary Ann.

I quite agreed with Harry that if Ruth was really undecided as to which of her two lovers she would accept, Gilbert's chance was at least as good as Shirley's. He was a light-hearted, light-headed and genial-tempered young fellow, always on the best of terms with all the world, himself included,

always easy and self-possessed, and consequently a favorite in all society.

Shirley was older and graver, and not near so handsome; and I am obliged to confess that he was far from being so good-natured as Gilbert Dare. Yet his passionate heart was tender as a woman's, and his character had a quality of steadfast honesty and truth which was more satisfactory to me than Gilbert's easy graces; though I liked Gilbert Dare well enough, too.

As fate and Harry would have it, Shirley was absent when Gilbert came over with his cousin, Susy Smith. Harry had sent him off upon some very important and unpostponable errand, and he did not get back until after sunset. It was a warm evening, and while Bessie and I washed up the tea-things, Harry and the rest betook themselves to the front veranda, where they were sitting, in the gathering dusk, when Shirley returned.

It was a still, sweet, sentimental sort of night; the whip-poor-wills were singing, down in the dim, old wood, beyond the orchard wall; faint, spicy odors came up from the flower-beds in the front yard; and the white-rose tree beside the gate loomed up like a pallid phantom in the gloom.

On such a night, it was natural enough for a young man who was in love with sweet Ruth Carey to place a seat for her among the rose-vines which wreathed the far end of the veranda, and to stand there leaning over the back of her chair and talking no one knew what tender nonsense, — as Gilbert Dare was doing.

And on such a night, also, my sister Harry was sure to be in her most witch-like mood of mockery and mischief. There was a scintillant gleam in her blue eyes, that told a warning tale and set us on our guard, if we were wise. It was not for nothing that she owned those weird, blue eyes, that white, *siren face*, that tangled mist of yellow hair, that alluring, tantalizing *beaute du diable*.

She was full of her odd nonsense and wild fun that night. She kept little dumpy, giggling Susy Smith in a state of mingled mirth and bewilderment; she made Ruth laugh, though Ruth did not like her much; and even Gilbert Dare turned once or twice, and looked at her with wondering, wistful eyes, as if he had half a mind to forsake Ruth and follow her. I thought he would, when I saw the expression of his face, as I

came out on the veranda; but just then Shirley entered at the gate, and Gilbert turned to Ruth again, with jealous loyalty.

Harry monopolized Shirley, without delay.

"Ah, Shirley, is that you? I am ten thousand times obliged to you; but you are late for your tea. Come in, and I'll get you some."

"I've had tea, at Mrs. Granger's," said Shirley, a little sulkily. "Did n't wish to stay, but they would not let me off."

"Oh!" cried Harry; "then you ought to thank me for sending you over there. Such biscuit and such marmalade! I know all about it."

Shirley made no answer. He cast a troubled glance at Ruth and Gilbert, and gnawed his black mustache in that uneasy fashion of his. But Harry continued, —

"Come and sit down here, Shirley, and I'll tell you a story, if you will keep the mosquitos from devouring me; they're thick as hasty pudding."

"What a vulgar simile, Harry!" exclaimed Bessie, leaning out of the parlor window.

"Oh, I did n't know you were there, Bess! Thick as leaves in Vallambrosa," amended Harry.

Shirley, after standing irresolutely for a moment, sat down upon the boards at Harry's feet and leaned back against the veranda railing.

"Well, what is the story?" he asked wearily.

"Oh, it's all about a young troubadour, who lived in the olden time, when lords and ladies used to dwell in stately castles and knock common people on the head at their patrician pleasure," said Harry. "He loved a fair, high-born lady, and it was rumored that she returned his love; but, alas! he had a rival."

"Ah! now it grows interesting," observed Shirley.

"And the rival had a friend who was a witch," Harry calmly proceeded. "But he did not know she was a witch" —

"I see how it ends," interrupted Shirley, again. "She prospered his love and helped him to success."

Harry answered, —

"Of course she did! But I was going to tell it all out in the most interesting style, and now you have spoiled it."

"Not at all," said Shirley. "Go on and tell it."

"No," said Harry. "When you have come to the end, what is the use of going back? Shall I sing you a song, instead?"

"If you will be so gracious. But tell me at least what became of the troubadour?"

Harry shook back her yellow curls, with an impatient toss.

"How can I tell? the story is such an old, old one. Perhaps he married the witch."

Then there was a silence. Presently, Shirley looked up and lazily inquired,—

"What sort of fellow was this troubadour of yours?"

"Why, as to that," said Harry slowly, "he might have been very much such a fellow as you!"

"And the witch,—was she much like you?"

"Mr. Shirley Bradford, if I were the queen I should order your head cut off, for that insinuation! I will not stay with you!" cried Harry, jumping up in mock indignation. "I shall go down to the orchard wall and listen to the whip-poor-wills."

"But the song you promised me?"

"I'll sing it to the whip-poor-wills!" laughed Harry. "Come along, if you want to hear it."

And what could Shirley do but follow her? In the warm dusk, her white dress went gleaming down through the orchard, and his tall figure moved darkly at her side. By and by, we heard her voice, clear and sweet upon the still night air, singing snatches of a quaint old ballad from the German.

"A maiden wanted a sweetheart brave,
And dug in the earth as one digs a grave,
For fifteen pence!

"She dug it around and she dug it about,
At last she dug her a student out,
For fifteen pence,
For fifteen pence!"

It was getting late, and Susy Smith, who had been yawning industriously for half an hour, suggested that it was time for her to go home. Gilbert reluctantly but politely arose to accompany her; and as he stepped forward, he stooped and picked up something white from under Harry's vacated chair.

"Miss Harry has dropped a paper; a letter, I should think," he said, handing it to Ruth, who had also emerged from the rose-wreathed corner, and who stood near him.

She took the paper and put it in her apron pocket, saying,—

"I will give it to Harry. Good-night, Mr. Dare. Come over tomorrow, Susy, and I will give you the pattern of my sacque."

Was she sad? were there tears in her eyes? It was too dark to see, but her voice had such a sound.

Up from the orchard, Harry's weird, sweet tones came floating,—

"My heart is a dove-cote,
With many about,
And one love flies in
When another comes out,—
For fifteen pence,
For fifteen pence!"

The next day it rained. Ruth came down to breakfast with a headache; at least she called it a headache. One does not commonly confess to an ache of the heart; and she certainly looked as if something had gone ill with her. Her soft, brown eyes were heavy as lead, and Harry's white wrapper was scarcely whiter than her cheeks, which were wont to wear so warm and rich a bloom.

She said but little to any of us, and not a word to Shirley. He, poor fellow, looked as miserable as if Ruth's headache had been his own, as I've no doubt he wished it was.

Ruth retired to her room as soon as we left the breakfast-table; and Shirley, after wandering disconsolately about the premises for an hour or two, finally went fishing.

Later, Susy Smith came over, bundled up in a waterproof, and with Gilbert Dare holding an umbrella over her head. Be-sie went up-stairs to ask if Ruth felt able to see them, and she sent word that she was dressing and would be down immediately.

After a few minutes, she made her appearance, and created a sensation; for she was fully attired for traveling, with hat, cloak and gloves, and carried a shawl-strap in her hand. We all stared at her in blank and speechless wonder.

"Flora, can I catch the noon train, do you think? I shall have to go home," she said quietly.

Bessie cried out,—

"Ruth Carey! Going home? You do not mean it!"

"Indeed I mean it, Bessie dear."

"But—what for?"

"I do not feel at all well," said Ruth; and her lips quivered a little, as she added, "And—I have other reasons. Please do not ask for them now. I will explain some time: I will write. But I really must go."

And she did go. We could not attempt to dissuade her, for it was evident that words would be wasted; her resolution was not to be altered. So we all put on our waterproofs and escorted her in the rain to the railway station, while Gilbert went after a man to bring her trunk.

"But what will Shirley say?" sighed Bessie. "He would not have you go off without taking leave of him, for anything."

Ruth answered gravely,—

"I have left a note for him; you will find it on the dressing-table in my room."

And Bessie seemed to consider that there was hope for her favorite in this piece of information.

We saw Ruth off, and went home; and soon after, Shirley returned from his piscatory expedition,—as usual, without any fish. Bessie promptly overwhelmed him with the information that Ruth was gone; and then hastened to revive him by administering the note which she had left for him.

He seized it and dashed out of the room with it. In less than five minutes, he dashed in again, like a roaring lion, with blazing eyes and white lips and passion-shaken frame. He thrust a letter into my hand, exclaiming, in a fury,—

"What does this mean? Is it some of Harry's work? If that little devil"—

"Shirley Bradford!" I uttered, in horror-stricken accents; then, as I cast my eyes over the letter, "Well, upon my word!"

"Well, what?" demanded Shirley.

"Why, this is Harry's last letter from Shirley Trescott. How do you come by it?"

"Ruth inclosed it to me; she thought I wrote it to Harry. She thinks I am a dissembling villain," said Shirley.

"Oh! I see it all now. What an idiotic letter!" I ejaculated, in disgust. "But Harry and Shirley Trescott are always going on in that fashion."

The letter read as follows,—

"MY DARLING HARRY,—You may say what you please about Ruth and her transcendental superiority,—but don't you dare to love anybody so well as you love me! As for Gilbert Dare, you can rest assured that I wish him all success. There will be no void left in my heart, if he carries off the paragon, Ruth. To you, my dear little Harry, belongs the first and dearest place in the heart of your devoted and faithful
SHIRLEY."

"What absurd stuff!" said I.

"Who is Shirley Trescott?" inquired Shirley.

"She is Harry's *alter ego*, and an old flame of Gilbert Dare's," I answered.

Shirley's brow darkened, as he exclaimed,—

"Do you suppose Harry meant"—

"O dear, no!" I interrupted. "Of course not."

But I had my secret doubts, for all that; and to this day, I am not sure that Harry did not drop that letter purposely, intending it to fall into Ruth's hands.

However, it all came right. Shirley followed Ruth on the next train; and he explained himself to such good purpose that Ruth's promised letter contained the news of their engagement. But Ruth hates Harry, and she cannot bear the name of Shirley Trescott.

"But I'll tell you something, Florina," says Harry, with her most elfish laugh. "That young troubadour of mine would have done very well if he had married the witch! As for me, I think I'll try to console poor Gilbert for his loss."

And then she sings,—

"My heart is a dove-cote,
With many about,
And one love flies in
When another comes out,—
For fifteen pence,
For fifteen pence!"

GETTING EVEN WITH HIM.

BY W. H. MACY.

CAPTAIN BARNARD of the Euphrates, and Captain Sisson of the Vesper, were old cronies, and had been shipmates in their young days. when both were "before the mast." Their respective ships now lay moored, side by side, in the Bay of Talcahuana, Chili, and the captains met on the wharf the next morning after the Vesper's arrival.

"Well, Sisson, what luck this cruise?" asked Captain Barnard, with a hearty shake of the hand.

"I've done pretty well—took five hundred barrels since I left here in the spring—but, look here, Barnard, have you got a spare cutting-fall that you want to sell? I parted one of mine in cutting my last whale, and I find it is too rotten to be trustworthy. I must have a new one at any price."

"No, I'm sorry to say I've got none to spare, and I doubt whether you'll be able to get one at all in this port."

"Well, there may be some other ships in before I leave for sea, and perhaps I may be able to get one."

The two skippers chatted of other matters for a few minutes, and then separated. Barnard at once made a straight course for the store of Bigelow, the principal ship-chandler of the port. He knew there was a coil of the desired size in the store for he had seen it.

"Bigelow," said he, entering in a hurry, "what do you ask for that cutting-fall? By the way—have you got another coil on hand?"

"No, that's the only one I have. I ask eighty dollars for it."

"Well, I must have it, right away too. I wish you would send it right down to the pier, and my boat will take it off to the Euphrates. Put it in my bill with the other stores I have had."

"All right," said Bigelow, glad to have made so good a trade. And in half an hour, the cutting-fall was hoisted on board Barnard's ship, somewhat to the surprise of his mate, who did not see the necessity of buying one.

Captain Sisson entered Bigelow's store

the same afternoon, and inquired for a coil of rope suitable for a cutting-fall. There was none to be found.

"It's a little remarkable," said the ship-chandler, "that I have had one on hand here for some time with no call for it, and this morning I sold it to Captain Barnard of the Euphrates."

Sisson said nothing, but he began to "smell a mice." His shipmate, Barnard, always was sharp on a trade.

"Barnard," said he, as soon as they met again, "what did you buy that fall for? You don't need it, do you?"

"Well—no—I don't know as I do. Come, I'll sell it to you, Sisson."

"What do you want for it?"

"A hundred and fifty dollars."

"Well, I must have it, and that you know. That's piling it on pretty steep; but I know your maxim, that's all fair in trade, so it's no use to argue the matter. Send it aboard the Vesper—or I'll send my boat and get it; but look here, Barnard, if I had known that you or any other brother whaler was in need of that fall, I should have been just fool enough to tell you that I had seen one up here at Bigelow's, and let you get it as cheap as you could."

"O, all's fair you know in trade," said Captain Barnard, with a laugh, for he was mightily pleased with the prospect of so easily making a profit of seventy dollars, which he meant to put into his own pocket.

Captain Sisson, though he really lost nothing himself, was careful of the interests of his owners, and was much vexed at what he, with his frank open-hearted ways and seafaring education, looked upon as a trick, though he could not deny that it would have been called among business men a legitimate transaction. He brooded over the subject, and often referred to it in conversation with his mate after the ship was at sea.

"Barnard was pretty sharp that time," said he. "Indeed, he always was; but I hope some time to square the yards with him."

Both ships went cruising on the Chili right-whaling ground after leaving Talca-

huana, and it was some two months afterwards that the Vesper's lookouts at the mastheads reported a ship in sight to leeward "manœuvring," indicating by this term that she had whales in sight, and probably boats down. Up went the helm, and the ship was steered off free to close with the strange vessel, which on a nearer approach proved to be the Euphrates, with urgent signals flying as if anxious to communicate. Captain Barnard was on the taffrail with his speaking-trumpet and hailed, informing Sisson that he had struck two right whales, which had led his boats a hard dance; that one boat was stoven and quite disabled; they have been obliged to cut from one of the whales, and it was getting late in the afternoon. He was afraid he should not be able to save either of them, though the wounded whale was still in sight with the irons in him. All this state of things was of course plain enough to those on board the Vesper; but no whaler has the right to interfere with the work of another ship in such a case without being requested to do so. Had Sisson captured the loose whale while the Euphrates was in sight, Barnard would have claimed the prize in right of his harpoons, as "marked craft" is always positive evidence in settling cases of disputed ownership. But Barnard was now in a tight place.

"Lower away your boats, Sisson," he said, "and help us. We'll throw chances together, and share all we get out of it."

"All right!" answered his old shipmate.

The Vesper rounded to, and dropped all her boats into the water and sent them to the rescue. This reinforcement of fresh men made a material change in the fortunes of the day, and before dark both the whales had been secured and hauled along-

side the Vesper, she being then nearest to the scene of action. The ships kept company while the whales were cut and the oil boiled out, both in the mean time taking other whales, but each acting for herself. When the two captains met on board the Vesper to divide the proceeds of the joint day's work, Captain Sisson reported that the two whales had yielded a hundred and forty barrels of oil.

"Pretty well," said Barnard. "That's seventy barrels apiece."

"Not quite," returned the other, with a twinkle in his eye. "That's eighty barrels for my ship, and sixty for yours."

"How so?" demanded Captain Barnard. "How do you figure that out?"

"Because the Vesper is a four boat ship, while the Euphrates mans only three. Consequently we are entitled to take *four-sevenths* of the joint profits—because we had more capital invested."

"That's pretty sharp practice," Sisson. "I don't think that's equity in this case, when you consider all the circumstances."

"Neither do I think it's equity—but it's *business*, and it's whalemen's law. All's fair in trade, provided one is law-honest, eh, Barnard? How about the cutting-fall in Talcahuana? Besides, in that case, you could put the whole profit in your own pocket, while in this, I am only doing what I legally ought to do for my owners and my crew, as well as for myself."

It was vain to protest. Sisson had both law and practice on his side, though the natural impulse of his free-and-easy nature would have been to take half and call it square. But he could not lose so good an opportunity of "squaring the yards," as he expressed it, with his avaricious crony, or in other words, getting even with him.